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*Char. Nisbet, Castle, 1792.*

Sketches and Hints  
OF  
CHURCH HISTORY,  
AND  
THEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSY.  
CHIEFLY TRANSLATED OR ABRIDGED FROM  
MODERN FOREIGN WRITERS.

V. 1

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By JOHN ERSKINE, D. D.  
ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF EDINBURGH.

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## P R E F A C E.

**T**HE chief design of the following sheets is, to impart to others, the entertainment and instruction which I have received from Foreign Writers, as to the history of the earliest ages of Christianity, and the present state of religion and theological controversy. Imperfect as the information is which they contain, I flatter myself it is important. In some instances, my work is a free translation; in others, an abridgment of select passages in the original Writers. Their sentiments, when different from my own, I have not disguised. Their opinions of persons and things, which I could not approve, I have not concealed \*. Without slavishly following their words and expressions, I have endeavoured, though I fear often unsuccessfully, to exhibit justly, their reasonings, and

\* I am sorry, that, in the Jewish Letters, the pious, though in some things mistaken, Lavater, and that the able defender of Christianity, Jerusalem, should be classed with such writers as Eberhard, Steinbart, Damm, Bahrdt, &c.

even their irony, in such plain and forcible language, that the reader might enter into their ideas and feelings. The meaning of my Authors, I have probably sometimes mistaken : I hope, however, these mistakes seldom or never affect any important fact or argument. My having learned the Dutch and German at an advanced period of life, and without the assistance of a teacher, the candid will sustain as a sufficient apology.

I now add a few things to what I have said in the beginning or end of most of the articles, for illustrating their usefulness.

Superficial thinkers may be staggered by Mr Gibbons's observations, History, vol. I. p. 516. " Seneca, the elder and younger  
 " Pliny, Tacitus, Plutarch, Galen, Epictetus,  
 " Marcus Antoninus, adorn the age in which  
 " they flourished, and exalt the dignity of  
 " human nature. Philosophy had purified  
 " their minds from the prejudices of superstition;  
 " and their days were spent in the pursuit of truth,  
 " and in the practice of virtue. Yet all these sages overlooked, or  
 " rejected the perfection of the Christian system.  
 " Their language, or their silence, equally discover  
 " their contempt for the growing sect, which, in their time,  
 " had diffused itself over the Roman empire." And, Notes, p. 76. " The new sect is totally  
 " un-

## P R E F A C E.

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“ unnoticed by Seneca, the elder Pliny, and “ Plutarch.” In larger works, some of them published earlier, some of them later than Mr Gibbons’s history, it has been shewn, that this objection against the miracles wrought in confirmation of the Gospel, specious as it appears, is far from solid. They who have not opportunity or leisure for perusing them, may find enough to dispel their doubts, in the extract from Professor Vernet.

Possibly the ludicrous representation in the Jewish Letters, of some of the opinions of the modern pretended reformers, and of the danger to faith and morals, from the prevalence of their system, may offend those of a graver cast. Let it however be observed, that the orthodox had been attacked in that very strain, not only in books of controversy, but histories and romances ; and that the ridicule in these Letters, is founded, not on uncertain report, but on plain assertions in printed books. The citations, so far as I have had opportunity to consult the original works, are fair and accurate. I presume they are equally so in other instances : For, in the Observations on the Letters, by Janus Philcusebius, Utrecht 1786, hardly any charge of falsehood is brought against them, except the assertions that Dr Priestley and some German Divines account Jesus the son of Joseph as well as of Mary ;

Mary ; and that their writings seem intended to introduce a refined Deism. Dr Priestley is too honest a man to deny the first part of the charge, having disputed the miraculous conception of Christ, in one of his letters to Dr Horsly. If rejecting the Scriptures as divinely inspired, and an infallible rule of faith and manners, is refined Deism, it will not be easy for Dr Priestley, it will be impossible for some German Writers, to prove this charge against them groundless. The improbability of a Jew being so learned in the controversies among Christian Divines, and in the decrees of the States of Holland, or that he should give himself any trouble, which scheme of Christian doctrine was most ancient, is urged by Janus. If this improbability were allowed, it might reflect on the taste of the author, not invalidate his facts and reasonings. But, why should it be thought improbable, that a Jew should curiously investigate the history of a religion still established in many kingdoms and states ; when many Christians have employed so great a part of their time in illustrating the history of religions, or sects of philosophy, long since extinct ?

The Preserver, under GOD, of the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of Holland, is not the only Prince who has lately testified a becoming regard to the great doctrines of the deity



deity and atonement of Christ, and other fundamental articles, in which Lutheran and Calvinist, and in some measure even Popish confessions agree. Our Gracious Sovereign, as Elector of Hanover, proposed a prize to be adjudged, by the Professors of Gottingen, to the best essay on the Deity of Christ; on which account, much illiberal abuse was thrown on his Majesty, in an anonymous German letter to the King of Great Britain. The Stadtholder, ten or twelve years ago, refused to hinder Mr Mark, a Professor of the Law of Nature and Nations, being deprived of his office for unsound opinions; declaring, that, much as he approved liberty of conscience, he would not protect those in enjoying the benefits of an establishment, who endeavoured to subvert the doctrines which they had solemnly subscribed. I regret that my imperfect information of facts, so honourable to our Sovereign, and to the Stadtholder, has prevented a full account of them from appearing in the following papers.

I hoped they would have also contained many interesting particulars, little known, as to the state of Protestants in France and Poland, and the tolerant spirit of their present monarchs. But circumstances not interesting to the public, have made it impossible for me to transcribe into long hand my manuscripts

on these subjects, and to avail myself of materials lately procured, for correcting and enlarging them; or to give an account of the Society erected at the Hague, 1786, for defending the truths of Christianity against modern opposers. I am sorry, that, in one of the English Reviews, so unfair an account was transcribed from a Dutch pamphlet, of their first publication—the Prize Dissertations of Velingius, Segaar, and Gavel, in answer to Dr Priestley's History of the Corruptions of Christianity. Many of the Doctor's mistakes, both in his reasonings, and citations from the Fathers, are well exposed by these learned Writers; and though the volume, which contains above 700 pages, is too large for translating, a proper selection from it, in English, would be a highly useful work.

Whether a second volume of these Hints and Sketches shall ever appear, depends on my life and leisure, on the reception the Public gives to what is now published, and on other uncertain circumstances.

EDINBURGH, }  
8th May 1790. }

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PRINCETON  
 SKETCHES AND HINTS  
 THEOLOGICAL  
 SEMINARY  
 T H E O L O G Y  
 A N D  
 C H U R C H - H I S T O R Y .

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N U M B E R I .

*Verbondeling over kerkelyke verdraagzaamheid, tegen H. GOODRICKE, door G. BONNET, Utrecht, 1770. i. e. A Treatise on Ecclesiastical Toleration, against H. GOODRICKE, by G. BONNET.*

**I**N 1768, Mr Goodricke, an English gentleman, a member of the Reformed Church at Groningen, published there an able attack on human confessions of faith, especially when containing articles not fundamental. This occasioned a still abler reply by Professor Bonnet. Though the late Mr Walker of Dundonald's excellent defence of confessions renders an abridgement of Dr Bonnet's performance unnecessary; yet, from its distinguished merit, and the new light in which it places some branches of the subject, I flatter myself the English reader will be gratified by a few extracts.

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Page 131. Let us try how far confessions should be limited to fundamental articles. I suppose a church, where men lawfully called, preach, and baptise children. Some who apply for admission, and who declare their belief of fundamental doctrines, profess at the same time their conviction, that every Christian has a right publicly to edify his brethren, and to dispense the sacraments; and that infant baptism is unlawful. They therefore request, that this liberty of preaching and dispensing the sacraments shall be granted to them; and that they shall not be hindered from endeavouring to convince their fellow Christians, that the baptism they received in infancy was invalid, and from rebaptising such as they may convince. They plead in favour of their request, that a Christian society is not intitled to extend her articles beyond fundamental doctrines, which the Church acknowledges the doctrines in which the petitioners differ from her are not. And now, Sir, if your reasoning is conclusive, because we think the sentiments of these claimants do not exclude them from salvation, we are obliged, by the laws of Christ, to admit them to the Church, and allow their doing what we clearly foresee must occasion confusion, offend thousands, and mar edification.—P. 132. A church may therefore refuse admission to those who acknowledge fundamental truths, on account of other matters, which concern order, edification, and peace; and sins not in denying ecclesiastical toleration to those who scruple her formulas. If she errs in thinking regulations necessary which are needless or wrong, she sins not in acting according to her conviction, though she is obliged to that full impartial search of truth which would change her sentiments.—P. 134. Let it however be observed,



ved, that stricter terms of admission are necessary with respect to teachers and governors, than with respect to the other members of a church. These last, notwithstanding their ignorance in some matters, and mistakes in others, yet, agreeing with us in what is most important and essential, may often, without danger, be admitted to church-fellowship. If indeed any such, by mouth or pen, endeavour to introduce doctrines opposite to the established formulas of a society, peace and edification may require their expulsion. Except in this case, our limitations of church-fellowship are few; and the articles of faith which we require private Christians to profess are generally common to all Christendom, at least to all the Protestant Churches. — P. 135. But what is sufficient for the members of a church is not sufficient for her teachers. Ignorance and mistakes, which may be borne with in the first, are in the last highly dangerous. Pastors, according to Paul's injunction, *Tit.* i. 9. must be able, by sound doctrine, both to instruct and to convince gainsayers, and therefore must hold fast the faithful word: and the church which regards her own purity and peace, will not chuse to be instructed by teachers who maintain what she accounts hurtful, though perhaps not damnable errors. — P. 258. To secure the preaching of essential truths, it may be necessary that a formula should contain truths the belief of which is not essential. A real Christian may believe a false doctrine, whose inconsistency with fundamental truths he doth not perceive. But if that false doctrine is preached, and generally received, there is the utmost danger that this will gradually introduce errors subversive of the very foundation of faith.

Mr Goodricke having appealed to Dr Doddridge's Reasonings against Ecclesiastical Formulas, Dr Bonnet particularly examines them.

P. 183. Dr Doddridge's first argument against ecclesiastical formulas is, " If they had been necessary, " the sacred oracles would have prescribed them, or at " least have given directions for composing and enforcing them." 1. This argument concludes too much, and therefore nothing. Short sketches of the principles of religion are judged necessary for the instruction of children : Yet Scripture contains no such sketches, and gives no particular rules for composing them.—2. The argument may be turned the other way. The Spirit, who foresaw the use of formulas, if that use had been hurtful, would have warned against it.—3. Scripture indeed justifies formulas ; Paul exhorts Christians to be of the same mind, *Rom.* xii. 16. ; xv. 5. *Phil.* iii. 15. They must therefore know what sentiments of the doctrines of Christianity are entertained by others. Now, as agreement in articles of faith may appear from words, so also from writings. He warns the Romans, *Rom.* xvi. 17. to avoid divisions contrary to the doctrines which they had learned ; and blames the opposite conduct of the Galatians. A church therefore cannot lawfully chuse teachers without sufficient evidence that they agree with her in the most important doctrines ; which cannot be better ascertained, than by their declaring that they assent to well-composed formulas, and resolve to preach agreeably to them. Something like this took place in the Apostolic Church. See 2 *Tim.* i. 13. ; ii. 2. *Tit.* i. 5. 9.

P. 186. Dr Doddridge's second argument is, "Weak  
" men,

“ men, perhaps, too, heated by debates, cannot be supposed to express their ideas more properly than the Apostles have done.” 1. This argument also, if it proves any thing, proves too much. In public preaching all judge it for edification, to use words, and to adopt a method different from those of the inspired writers, and to illustrate, enlarge upon, and enforce their instructions. Preachers are fallible men, incapable of expressing themselves more accurately than the Apostles. Yet we confine them not to reading the words of the Apostles.—2. If the Church can only prescribe a confession of faith in the words of Scripture, she must admit all who appeal to Scripture for their doctrines, though they understand Scripture in a sense that appears to the Church absurd and dangerous; for instance, understand Christ to be God in a Socinian or Arian sense, and teach, as the way of life, what indeed leads to destruction. Good confessions introduce not into the Church doctrines new and hitherto unknown. But when disputes arise about important truths, formerly expressly acknowledged or implicitly supposed, though passion and weakness may appear in defending truth, truth doth not therefore cease to be truth, or error to be error.

P. 189. 3dly, Dr Doddridge argues, “ The multiplying and enforcing confessions, has, as experience shows, been a chief cause of divisions in the Church.”

1. This argument again proves too much. The explaining Scripture has occasioned great divisions. Should pastors, to prevent them, only read the Scriptures to their people, and never attempt to illustrate them by word or by pen?—2. The fact is inaccurately stated. Confessions have not occasioned the greatest

divisions in the Church, but rather have been occasioned by them. They were framed when some, who were judged to err from the faith, openly published and endeavoured to bring over others to their peculiar opinions.—3. If confessions have occasioned hurtful contentions, we must distinguish the use and abuse of them. The last should not hinder the first. If men adopt false or unnecessary articles of faith, the contention thus occasioned must be ascribed, not to the making a confession, but to the making it improperly. The schism arising from heretics refusing true and important doctrines, must be charged on their errors and prejudices, not on a good formula.—4. Be it so, that the best confessions have done hurt. Perfection is not to be found in any human compositions. It is enough, if greater hurt would have been occasioned by the want of them. If we reflect, how the corruption of the heart opposes the law, and the pride of it the gospel, how careless most are in searching after truth, and how the arts of the prince of darkness, and the temptations of the world, blind the mind; surely they merit praise who are not restrained by an inconsiderate moderation from using what appears to them a lawful mean, well calculated for preserving and transmitting to posterity the faith once delivered to the saints.

P. 193. Dr Doddridge's fourth argument is, "The introducing formulas is a great temptation to candidates for the ministry, and may discourage those of tender consciences, and who bid fairest for usefulness."

1. I acknowledge the necessity of signing a formula is a great temptation to men whose sentiments it condemns. Socinians and Arminians may think it their interest to subscribe the very reverse of what they believe. But

it



it is better that a few make a hypocritical profession, than that a church should suffer from her teachers bringing in damnable heresies.—2. A candidate for an office should be satisfied that, with a good conscience, he can submit to the conditions annexed to it. If he finds he cannot, and gives up pretensions to the office, the temptation ceases. If notwithstanding he solicits it, his own dishonesty is blameable, not these conditions. There may be laws and penalties opposite to his sentiments who wishes to be nominated a judge; but is he intitled to demand that these should be altered, lest they tempt him, in order to obtain an office, to act against conscience? It is an intolerant spirit, when one would have his conscience prescribe to the consciences of hundreds.—3. A tender conscience in some, and pretensions to it in others, may accompany the most dangerous errors and extravagant superstitions; and has often led men to plead for stricter formulas and narrower terms of communion.

P. 195. Dr Doddridge's last argument is, "Formulas will not answer their design, and preserve unity of sentiment. Men of opposite opinions will satisfy their consciences, by subscribing them in some improper sense, and merely as articles of peace." But a church bids fairer for unity when her teachers adopt her confession, than when they may preach sentiments opposite to hers. The honest heretic not subscribing what he disbelieves, has thus no opportunity of infecting with his errors the members of such a church; and the dishonest will be more reserved, and less successful, in opposing what they have subscribed; and the church suffers less by a few teachers putting on the appearance of orthodoxy, than by all of them  
 having

having liberty to teach what they please.—P. 197. The Doctor replies, “ When one begins to teach doctrines which his hearers account dangerous, and “ subversive of Christianity, it is then time enough to “ take such steps as the nature of the errors, and his “ relation to them, admit.” But, 1. What is the step to be taken? Is it, to dismiss the preacher; to endeavour to convince him; or to oblige him to renounce his errors, and to promise henceforth to teach otherwise?—2. Who must take these steps? Is it the hearers?—3. When must they be taken? The Doctor says, when doctrines are taught which to the hearers appear dangerous. But what if the hearers, who are united by no common confession, should differ. Suppose the preacher a Socinian: Shall the judging his doctrine be left to the most sensible and learned? These are always few in number. They may be sensible and learned Socinians; and must the larger part of the community blindly submit to their decisions? Or shall the majority determine? Perchance these are the most ignorant and violent, and without examination have gone over to the sentiments of the preacher, or from other considerations are averse to dismiss him.—4. Or shall the decision be left to other teachers? Perhaps the doctrines complained of by a few are represented in so different a light by the many, that they can form no certain conclusion. Some of the judges may secretly believe the dangerous opinions, and be happy that another has the courage to preach them. If they detest the error, loads of reproach will be cast upon them, should they, on account of it, dismiss the teacher from his charge. He, as well as they appeal to the Scriptures. They must therefore declare in other words,



words, in what sense they understand the scriptures which respect the disputed opinion, and must judge agreeably to that declaration. But thus they do the very thing which the Doctor condemns, and make a human formula the term of ministerial communion. If formulas are lawful for removing differences in a church, they cannot be unlawful for preventing them.—5. What will be the effect of such an occasional formula? The preacher objects to conditions of holding his charge which were not mentioned to him when he undertook it; and pleads, that his own convictions must have more weight with him, than the judgement of any assembly of churchmen, however numerous. Or, if he sign the formula to prevent beggary, he may do it dishonestly, and satisfy himself that he receives it in some limited improper sense, or merely as an article of peace; and thus the evil takes place which the Doctor has urged against a fixed formula.

P. 210.—276. Dr Bonnet shows, that Mr Goodricke's arguments against subscription to an established formula equally apply to what he would substitute in the room of it, a declaration of assent to essential truths in one's own words. Those called to judge the sufficiency of such declarations, from ignorance, carelessness, favour, or prejudice, may shut the door against the most useful candidates, or open it to the most erroneous.

P. 285. Mr Goodricke's opinion, That a church should exclude none from her communion whose errors are not so inconsistent with the foundations of faith, as to exclude them from salvation; encourages the church to decide, what would require infallibility, the highest degree of error, and the lowest degree of knowledge,

knowledge, consistent with salvation. He who seriously reflects what the apostles were before the resurrection of Christ, and what were the errors of many of the believing Corinthians, Galatians, and Hebrews, must conclude such an attempt dangerous. Let a church engage in this delicate business, according to her best light, scarcely can contentions be avoided, as to receiving or rejecting a candidate, which may often issue in divisions and schisms. This term of admission destroys itself. The sincere, though erring Christian, may think certain terms of admission too large and extensive, and may scruple joining the church, unless they be narrowed. If you exclude them, because you cannot narrow your terms of admission, then you make rules, by which those are deprived of church-fellowship whom Christ has received. If you admit them, and narrow your terms, other sincere Christians must be excluded, whom formerly you could have admitted.

P. 292. If Mr Goodricke's principles are right, a church should receive those who maintain errors from which consequences flow subversive of fundamental truths, if the erroneous do not see or acknowledge these consequences. Now, may not one believe in Jesus as the Lord his righteousness; and may not that faith purify his heart, though he believes the supremacy of the Pope, purgatory, prayers for the dead, that unwritten traditions are a part of the rule of faith, and that the church has a right to appoint festivals in honour of saints? Some, or all of these errors have been maintained by men who believe the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and detest other Popish tenets, which they are sensible are inconsistent with them. According, therefore, to Mr Goodricke's system, one should

should not be excluded from church-fellowship on account of these errors.—Again, may not a true Christian account infant baptism unlawful; and therefore contend, that none should be admitted to the Lord's table who have not, when come to age, received the initiating seal of the covenant?—May not one be saved, who thinks, that preaching the gospel is lawful to all in common, and ought not to be confined to a particular order of men, and who views human learning as useless, or even hurtful? Now, let our established church admit men who retain these opinions. You will however allow, that at least she has liberty to instruct them better, and to confute their errors; yet her using this right will offend them, unless they are allowed the same liberty. “Must we, to live in your church, sit at your feet, and patiently hearken to your instructions? Do you think that we err? We think the same of you. If you are persuaded that truth is on your side; we know that it is on ours. If you claim a privilege which you refuse to us under pretence of union, you lord it over your brethren.”—P. 296. What then, shall there be a deep silence observed as to these different opinions? This will be liable to the objections urged against confessions, that they hinder men from becoming wiser, and deliberately fix a plan, which must occasion many remaining in ignorance or error. Some will deem it criminal to enter into, or to remain in a society which requires such silence. “We demand freedom of speaking, as well as of thinking. We hold our opinions truths, which we are bound to teach and defend. We cannot in conscience have fellowship with a church which prohibits our performing that duty.” By

“ By insisting on this criminal silence, you oblige us  
 “ to separate from you, and thus exclude those from  
 “ your communion whom Christ hath received.”——

P. 297. The alledged end of union, therefore, cannot be gained, unless all are allowed, publicly and privately, to teach what they account truth. It is argued, that the church ought not to reject those whom Christ hath received. Now, Christ hath received men who not only entertain, but who openly teach and defend the above-mentioned tenets. The church, therefore, must receive them, notwithstanding their zeal in propagating these errors. Whatever limitations you propose, must be limitations which do not concern the fundamentals of Christianity, and consequently, by Mr Goodricke's principles, unlawful.——P. 299. Indeed, if these principles are followed out, the most opposite opinions must be not only tolerated, but publicly taught in the reformed churches. A teacher, convinced by some Mennonites who have joined the society, that infant-baptism is invalid, preaches, that the greatest part of the church ought to be rebaptised. Some persuaded by him are so, to the great offence of others, who consider this as an unlawful repetition of baptism. The new principles of the teacher may lead him to deny the Lord's supper to those who refuse to be rebaptised, at least must restrain him from baptising children. Another happens to think that baptism is necessary to salvation, and cannot be lawfully administered except by a preacher. He complains of the injury done his children, and leaves a society where he thinks their eternal salvation is in danger. And now, how shall the dispute be terminated? Shall the members of the church do it? They are divided; and conscience ob-  
 liges



liges each to retain his own sentiments. Shall a consistory or other judicatory do it? There are members of the church who would exclaim against their interposition as tyranny and usurpation. Let us, however, suppose all willing to submit. The decision will be difficult and dangerous. It would be persecution, to force the teacher to act against conviction. It would be unjust, that worthy Christians should be debarred from the Lord's table, and their children not baptized. Mr Goodricke's principles forbid dismissing the teacher from his charge, for maintaining and acting in consequence of an error consistent with saving faith. —

P. 302. Let me suppose a larger society, where different teachers officiate, and where the members differ in many points, not fundamental, from their teachers, and from one another. A number of good men educated in Popery, and who retain the Popish doctrines formerly mentioned, join the society. At length, some of the teachers are infected with these errors, preach them, and gain numerous proselytes, who with them acknowledge the Pope's supremacy, observe festivals in honour of saints, and zealously endeavour to bring over other members of the church to the same sentiments. Alarmed at the growing evil, other teachers from the pulpit demonstrate the falsehood and dangerous tendency of these opinions; and perhaps, to the offence of the Popish members, pronounce the Pope Antichrist, and festivals in honour of saints superstitious. And now the fire of controversy burns. These questions become the chief subject of sermons and conversation. The peace and order of the church is broken. Worship is carried on with contention, and without profit. A preacher is about to begin, when, lo, a brother,

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persuaded

persuaded that liberty of conscience belongs to all Christians, and perhaps a little tinged with enthusiasm, suddenly starts up in the midst of the congregation, to speak a word for edification. The preacher, who has sought out acceptable words, and words of wisdom, that he may not give public offence, waits, though not patiently, the end of this rhapsody, and then speedily begins, lest another brother or sister should further interrupt him. And now, how shall a society, constituted of teachers and members of such jarring sentiments, remain united? Such evils must unavoidably follow the proposed alterations of our ecclesiastical constitution, unless the members of a church were generally cool and indifferent as to their opposite doctrines and usages; which cannot be expected from men of eminent piety and tender consciences, especially when the disputable matters affect worship and practice. Such will esteem no doctrine unimportant which infinite wisdom hath revealed, no command trifling which divine authority hath enacted. — P. 307. A church, therefore, founded on Mr Goodricke's principles, falls of itself. Contention, divisions, public offences, separate her members one from another. Each adheres to teachers of his own taste, and avoids instructors who would draw him aside from what he accounts the doctrines and the laws of Christ. Many whom the church received and welcomed as brethren, withdraw from her, from love of peace and edification. Those of different sentiments, by often disputing about them, become more disaffected to and embittered against one another than formerly. They who remain in the church, by often hearing the same doctrine maintained one part of the day and opposed another, are in no small



small hazard of scepticism. Thus the flattering scheme of mending our constitution, by widening the terms of communion, is blasted ; and the church returns to her former, or to a worse situation.—The regulations necessary to prevent these evils in a church, may, I acknowledge, exclude from her many sincere Christians. But these can worship in separate societies, and chuse teachers, whose sentiments they more approve. Thus the edification, both of those who remain in a church and of those who separate from it, will be more effectually promoted.

## N U M B E R II.

*Eenige Leerstukken van dan Protestantischen Godsdienst verdedigd, door Mr H. VAN ALPHEN, Utrecht, 1775, in p. 522. i. e. Some Doctrines of the Protestant Religion defended, by Mr H. VAN ALPHEN.*

MANY sound in the faith have argued, that, in ways unknown to us, Christ may be revealed, and his merits imputed to heathens. Eberhard, in his *Nieuwe Apologie voor Socrates*, rejects their reasonings, but maintains the future happiness of heathens, on other principles ; which, if well supported, must justify his conclusion, and at the same time prove the falsehood of doctrines, in which not Calvinists only, but in some measure Lutherans, Papists, Mennonites, and Arminians are agreed. Van Alphen's remarks are confined to Eberhard's reasonings against the atonement of Christ,—the necessity of supernatural influence for reforming the hearts and lives of men,—the heathen

not possessing virtues which merit eternal rewards,—and the eternity of future punishments.

My present account of this excellent treatise shall be confined to what relates to the doctrine of atonement, p. 42. 150.

The Protestant doctrine as to the atonement is this : Sinners of mankind are reconciled to God, and attain eternal happiness, only through the interposition of a Mediator, who has perfectly satisfied Divine justice, and whose satisfaction is imputed to them. Is this doctrine founded on Scripture? Is it consistent with reason.

I. Eberhard thus endeavours to prove that it is not founded on Scripture: “The Scripture-representations  
“ of this subject, being conveyed in figurative lan-  
“ guage, are peculiarly exposed to wrong interpreta-  
“ tions. The understanding them literally has produ-  
“ ced doctrines contrary to good taste, to philosophy,  
“ and to sound criticism. Thus the reasonings of Gro-  
“ tius and Reinbec from the words *απολυτρωσις* and *λυτρον*  
“ have by Le Clerc been shown inconclusive. The word  
“ *satisfaction* occurs not in Scripture; and the idea  
“ annexed to it is collected from various texts, injudi-  
“ ciously connected together. The expressions of wri-  
“ ters, accustomed to a worship of which sacrifices  
“ were a chief part, and in whose language many ima-  
“ ges were borrowed from sacrifices, have occasioned  
“ many mistakes in those who do not consider the ori-  
“ gin of these figurative phrases. Of imputation the  
“ Scripture never speaks, save to express a judgement  
“ passed upon men, in consequence of their moral con-  
“ duct.”

To

To this they who adhere to the generally-received Protestant doctrine reply :

It is inconsistent with the design of revelation, so to propose doctrines, which have an immediate influence on religion and virtue, as should lead, not the multitude only, but even the more intelligent, to mistake their meaning. If the all-perfect God abhors the doctrine, that forgiveness is founded on the righteousness of a Mediator, and offered to all who believe on him ; he makes God a deceiver, who supposes that he speaks to men in language which lead to such ideas. What would we say of a creditor, who by ambiguous expressions should persuade his debtor, that a friend had paid his debt, and that his discharge only depended on his consenting to and approving that generous deed ; when yet the creditor was resolved to exact payment from the debtor himself ? If truths are published which immediately respect the salvation of mankind, the words employed must be so clear, that there may be no cause for doubt as to their meaning. He unjustly claims divine authority for a message, who delivers it in terms dark and obscure, and thus leaves it as uncertain as reason had done, what is the path to future happiness. Now the doctrine of atonement, and of faith, as interesting in it, is not a mere speculative mystery, though mysteries are supposed in it, but points out how we may be reconciled to God. To men, uncertain how they should recover the lost favour and image of God, we cannot suppose that God would reveal so important a matter in language which even the most knowing should generally err in explaining. The sacred oracles lie not in asserting their own clearness in things necessary to be known. He who was sent to be the Light

of the world, left it not in its former darkness as to a question of all others the most important. In the Apostolic age a dispute arose, Whether hope of God's favour was only founded on the merits of the Redeemer, or, in part at least, on the works of the law. The last opinion the Apostles, and especially Paul, have expressly confuted, *Rom.* iii. 20. "Therefore by the  
 " deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified in  
 " God's sight." *Ib.* v. 23. 24. "For all have sinned,  
 " and come short of the glory of God; being justified  
 " freely by his grace, through the redemption that is  
 " in Christ Jesus." *Gal.* ii. 21. "If righteousness come  
 " by the law, then is Christ dead in vain." — Were the Apostles mistaken in this doctrine, or did they teach it by inspiration? And was not their doctrine understood as we understand it, by the first and best Christians, who enjoyed their immediate instructions \*? What shall we say of a religion, which even the first who taught, and the first who received it, understood not? Can we suppose, that men who familiarly conversed with the Apostles, were not informed by them what was the true method of reconciliation with God, and what the signification of the metaphorical language in which their writings conveyed that doctrine? Is it not surprising, that men, not educated in the Jewish religion, perceiving the dangerous abuse of images borrowed from the Jewish sacrifices, should not have warned against it?

Further, Many Scriptures teach the atonement in language plain and simple, and in no degree figurative.

\* See the testimonies of Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, and Polycarp, in *Zimmermanni Opusculis*, t. 2. P. 1. p. 67. & seq.

*Rom.* iv. 25. "Who was delivered for our offences."

*Rom.* v. 6. 8. 9. "Christ died for the ungodly. While  
" we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more  
" then, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved  
" from wrath by him." (Passages where Wolffius has  
shown, that *υπερ υμων* must mean, in our room and stead.)

1 *Pet.* iii. 18. "Christ also hath once suffered for sin,  
" the just for the unjust." 1 *Cor.* xv. 3. "Christ died

" for our sins, according to the Scriptures." 2 *Cor.*  
v. 14. "If one died for all, then were all dead."

1 *John* iii. 16. "Hereby perceive we the love of  
" God, that he laid down his life for us." *Acts* x.

43. "To him give all the prophets witness, that  
" through his name, whosoever believe on him, shall

" receive the remission of sins." *Isa.* liii. 5.—7. "He  
" was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised

" for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace  
" was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.

" The Lord caused to rush upon him the iniquities  
" of us all. When they were required, he was op-

" pressed."

If other Scriptures express the doctrine of atone-  
ment in language borrowed from sacrifices, this was  
well suited to give just ideas of that doctrine; not  
only because the substitution of the sacrifice, in place  
of the offerer, was known to all nations; but because  
sacrifices were instituted by God, that the temporal  
forgiveness and external holiness which they procured  
might typify the Saviour of the world procuring per-  
fect forgiveness and inward purity \*. He who can.

\* See Hervey's *Theron*, Dialogue 3. and Michaelis *Typische  
Gottesgelehrtheit*, § 22. 24. & 54.



didly peruses the Epistle to the Hebrews, and believes it genuine, must see this typical reference. Indeed, if it is denied, it will be difficult to vindicate the Mosaic ritual from laying stress on trifles, and encouraging superstition; and still more so, to show, that Christianity was in any degree founded on Judaism. What, therefore, can convey plainer information of the great design of Christ's coming, and the manner in which he attained it, than the words of the Baptist, *John* i. 29. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" and of Paul, *1 Cor.* v. 7. "Christ, our passover, was sacrificed for us." Surely this intimates, that, as the paschal lamb was slain to preserve the Israelites from death, so Christ was sacrificed to save believers from eternal destruction. — To say, that we must assign to these sacrificial expressions a sense agreeable to good taste and philosophy, means, if it mean any thing, that we are to discover the sense of revelation, not from the words it uses, but from our own previous ideas. And, if expressions of Scripture correspond not with these, we must twist and bend them till they cease to contradict our sentiments, and not anxiously enquire, if the words naturally admit the sense we put upon them. Since, therefore, the Scriptures, unless tortured to speak an unnatural language, represent the sufferings and obedience of Christ as the only procuring cause of salvation, we must either receive their testimony, or deny their divine authority. If the expression, "Christ, our passover, was sacrificed for us," only means, that his instructions and example have been of great benefit to mankind, why does the Apostle of the Gentiles, whose sermons turned multitudes from idols to the living God, and who ex-

horted.

horted the Corinthians, "Be ye followers of me," why did he, all this notwithstanding, ask with holy zeal and indignation, "Was Paul crucified for you?" 1 *Cor.* i. 13. Did the same Apostle ascribe no peculiar merit to the cross of Christ, when he preached without the ornaments of eloquence, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect, when he represents Christ crucified, as to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, and yet resolves to know nothing among the Corinthians, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified? Had he represented Christ as a philosopher, who, like Socrates, confirmed his doctrine by his death, that doctrine could not have appeared foolishness to the Greeks, who esteemed and admired the daring to suffer for the good of mankind, and in the cause of truth and virtue. But salvation from the punishment and power of sin, through the sufferings and obedience of one hanged on a tree, the pride of their hearts could not endure.—Further, I appeal to the representation of Christ as a priest, *Heb.* vii. 24. *et seq.* "But this man, because he abideth for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, who come to God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the peoples: For this he did once, when he offered up himself." Equally decisive are the words of Paul, 2 *Cor.* v. 21. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in  
"him;"

“ him ;” and these of Peter, 1 *Ep.* ii. 24. “ Who his own self bore our sins in his own body, on the tree.” If these words assert not, that salvation is bestowed in virtue of Christ’s sufferings, we see not what interpretation can be given them, consistent with common sense. —The proper signification of the words *λυτρωσις* and *απολυτρωσις*, evidently is, deliverance from some evil by the payment of a ransom. Particularly, the words *αντιλυτρον περι παντων*, 1 *Tim.* ii. 6. intimate such a ransom, wherein the ransomier undergoes the evil, which would otherwise have been suffered by the ransomed \*. And thus Paul explains it, *Gal.* iii. 13. “ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made “ a curse for us.” This is the literal sense of the word *αντιλυτρον*, favoured by the connection, and fully applicable to the sufferings and obedience of Christ. It must therefore be retained, unless it can be proven absurd and contradictory. Divine truths could not be understood if they were not taught in words borrowed from ideas, transactions, and institutions, common among men. Now, a ransom being given for the deliverance of a captive, the word ransom clearly expresses the chief design of Christ’s obedience and sufferings, even to deliver the prisoners of divine justice from a punishment from which they could not otherwise have been delivered. If a number of noblemen should rescue their prince from captivity, by themselves becoming captives, it would be absurd to argue, that no ransom was paid for the prince, because none was paid in gold or silver. Peter’s language, therefore, 1 *Ep.* i. 18. 19. is plain and proper, “ Forasmuch as ye know, that ye

\* See Lomeier de lustrationibus Vet. Gentil. c. i. p. 7.

“ were

“ were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver  
 “ and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as  
 “ of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”——It  
 is acknowledged, that the word *satisfaction* in so many  
 letters is not found in Scripture. The thing itself how-  
 ever is ; and, though a chain of reasoning may be ne-  
 cessary to give a fuller and distincter view of that doc-  
 trine, for demonstrating the general truth of it, they  
 are not necessary. That is sufficiently done in such  
 Scriptures as these, *Rom.* v. 10. “ When we were ene-  
 “ mies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of  
 “ his Son ;” *2 Cor.* v. 19. “ God was in Christ recon-  
 “ ciling the world to himself, not imputing their tref-  
 “ passes to them ;” and *Heb.* ii. 17. where Jesus is  
 termed a “ merciful and faithful High Priest in things  
 “ pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the  
 “ sins of the people.” These Scriptures represent Je-  
 sus as the procuring cause of our reconciliation with  
 God, and as by his death removing something which  
 hindered that reconciliation. — Where the Scripture  
 speaks of God’s not imputing to men their trespasses,  
 it surely speaks of an imputation, not in consequence  
 of their own moral conduct. Nor is it absurd to speak  
 of the deed of another as imputed to us, or placed to  
 our account, when the consequences of that deed are  
 the same as if we ourselves had done it. The obedi-  
 ence and sufferings of Christ, procured forgiveness and  
 sanctifying grace, surely not for himself, who needed  
 them not, but for others ; and these others they could  
 not profit, if they were not placed to their account,  
 so that they might be justly treated, as if they had  
 performed that obedience, and endured these sufferings.  
 A creditor, without any absurdity, imputes to a  
 debtor



debtor payment made by a third person in his behalf, and on that account discharges the debt. This is the reason assigned for the sufferings of Christ; *Iſa.* liii. 6. 7. "The Lord hath caused to rush upon him the iniquities of us all. When they were required, he was "oppressed." These words expressly assert, that Christ was treated as if he had committed our iniquities; especially if we compare with the prophet the plain declaration, that our sins were imputed to Christ, and Christ's righteousness to us; *2 Cor.* v. 21. "He "hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in "him \*."

II. But is this doctrine favoured or opposed by the oracles of reason? How shall we consult these oracles? To show that the principles on which our adversaries charge this doctrine with absurdity, are either destitute of proof, or insufficient to overthrow it, would only argue it possible, but would not convince one who thinks it is not clearly revealed in Scripture.—Nor is it enough, to show that this doctrine corresponds with the perfections and designs of God, if it is allowed, that restoration to his favour and image, without any satisfaction, would have done so equally. Many things exist not, which have no inconsistency with the divine perfections. God might have manifested his glory, and imparted happiness, by creating worlds, which notwithstanding never shall be created. It would be rash to conclude, that a plan takes place, because it is wise, and just, and good, unless reason or revelation

\* See Wolffii *Cur. Crit.* in locum, et Turretinum de Satisfactione, P. 2. p. 117.



discover its existence.—Far otherwise is it, if an atonement can be proven the only mean of purchasing forgiveness for the sinner, and restoring him to his original rectitude. For this concludes not the possibility only, but the necessity of an atonement.—You will say, If reason can prove these, what occasion is there for revelation? I reply: Though it is not necessary to shew the necessity of an atonement for man's recovery from the ruins of his apostasy, it is necessary to publish that such an atonement has been made, and to direct how an interest in it may be obtained. If the atonement generally taught, has all the characters of that which the Divine perfections require, it is either revealed in the inspired books, or man is left without the knowledge of a ransom, and the well-grounded hopes of pardon. Let us accurately examine, where consequences are so important.

Unjustly are the believers of an atonement reproached, for representing the Supreme Being as passionate, revengeful, irreconcilable, cruel, and delighting in blood. To suppose justice in God without goodness, we allow absurd: but, it is no less absurd, to suppose goodness in God without justice. The union and harmony of the Divine perfections, is as essential to God as the perfections themselves. If one perfection must give place to another, one must be greater than another. But, all the perfections of God are infinite. His goodness is not greater than his justice. His aversion to moral evil, is as infinite as his delight in the prosperity of his creatures. The last cannot oppose the first; for then the harmony of the Divine perfections would cease. All the Divine

perfections are so connected, that no one can be so displayed as to darken another. The effects of God's love to a depraved creature, can never be inconsistent with the exercise of his aversion to moral evil; and in the views in which the depraved are objects of his displeasure, they cannot be at the same time objects of his love.

But, " God is not hurt by the sinner. We  
 " must not ascribe to him the affections of men  
 " eager to avenge an injury. At least we cannot  
 " deny him the privilege which even man hath,  
 " of pardoning an offence, and renouncing his  
 " right of punishment. From a false interpreta-  
 " tion of a few scriptures, God has been repre-  
 " sented as a creditor, and man as his debtor:  
 " But, if so, God must be entitled, as every cre-  
 " ditor is, freely to discharge the debt. The im-  
 " putation, therefore, of Christ's merits and suf-  
 " ferings, cannot be inferred from God's claims  
 " as a creditor; for his availing himself of these  
 " claims, cannot be known, without preying into  
 " things hid from us. An atonement can there-  
 " fore only be necessary for maintaining the dig-  
 " nity of God's moral government, preserving  
 " virtue, and securing proper regard to justice.  
 " Now, these ends cannot be reached by an im-  
 " puted atonement: punishment being an evil,  
 " cannot be employed by a good being, unless  
 " for ends, whose goodness is greater than the  
 " evils suffered, and which could not be obtained  
 " without inflicting them. God punishes not for  
 " the common good only, but also for the refor-  
 " mation of the sufferer; which being accom-  
 " plished, punishment has no farther use. It was  
 " designed to influence the love and practice of  
 " virtue;

“ virtue ; and when these are produced, it must  
 “ give place to the happy consequences of amend-  
 “ ment. Punishment, therefore, being a benefit  
 “ even to the sufferer, when properly viewed by  
 “ him, must produce emotions of love and grati-  
 “ tude. Now these advantages, flowing from the  
 “ connexion of sufferings with crimes, and the  
 “ reformation produced by that connexion, can-  
 “ not be gained by the punishment of any except  
 “ the offender himself, who could not be made  
 “ sensible of, and affected with that connexion,  
 “ if another suffered in his stead. The justice of  
 “ God, is his goodness, governed by his wisdom.  
 “ Wisdom decides that the transgressor himself  
 “ suffer, and justice forbids unprofitably punish-  
 “ ing the innocent. If God cannot forgive the  
 “ sinner, merely on account of his sorrow for sin  
 “ and return to duty, it must be, because such  
 “ forgiveness would not become him, and tend  
 “ to promote virtue. But, the reverse is true.  
 “ Such forgiveness agrees with that first principle  
 “ of God’s government, that every one should  
 “ enjoy as much of his favour as he merits. In  
 “ the system of atonement, God passes from one  
 “ extreme to another, from the highest aversion  
 “ to the highest favour, though the objects of  
 “ these opposite dispositions remain the same.  
 “ In the opposite system, the Divine favour is  
 “ exactly proportioned to the inclinations of the  
 “ heart ; and the first step to it is, that aversion  
 “ to vice, which is also the first step to virtue.”

To this Protestants reply—

God being infinitely and unchangeably happy,  
 cannot be injured, if by injury you understand  
 painful feelings occasioned by the infliction of

evil. But such feelings are accidental, not necessary consequences of an injury, and depend upon the nature, circumstances and relations of the person injured. Amintor hears his absent father reproached. Both father and son are injured, yet the son only feels the injury. He injures me, who maliciously darts at me a deadly weapon, though something, by him unforeseen, prevents its wounding me. If the perfections of God cannot be diminished, nor his happiness disturbed, it is not, because he is not injured : It is, because injuries cannot deprive him of what is necessary and unchangeable. Yet, it follows not, that he doth not view with displeasure, and that he will not punish those who injure him : for that would be inconsistent with his omniscience and holiness. Our opponents must therefore show, that the painful feelings occasioned by an injury, are either the injury itself, or so necessarily connected with it, that the one cannot take place without the other : ere they infer, that because the Deity is not hurt, therefore he is not injured by sin.

But, “ May not God, though injured by the  
 “ sinner, freely forgive the injury, and deliver  
 “ without any punishment, from the consequences of sin ? ” God, as the former and preserver of rational beings, is disposed to bestow upon them the happiness of which they are capable. But, he is also entitled to prescribe them laws, and to demand their perfect obedience. In the first relations, he hath implanted in them a love to happiness, and an aversion to pain, and directed and enabled them to obtain the one, and to avoid the other, by observing laws, from the very nature and relations of things so necessary for  
 their

their happiness, that it is impossible they should reach it by an opposite path. The natural consequences of vice cannot be the same with those of virtue; and the connexion between moral and natural evil is so strict, that the second follows the first. Without any positive punishment, an accusing and tormenting conscience makes the sinner miserable; not to mention the bodily diseases, and the loss of character which vice often occasions\*.

—You will ask, How does one injure the Supreme Being by a conduct hurtful to himself? I reply: He who acts oppositely to Nature's laws; seeks to disappoint the Divine plan for conducting his creatures to perfection and happiness. He exalts himself above the Supreme. His actions say, that God hath not fixed proper means for accomplishing his ends. He seeks indeed joy and happiness; but he seeks them not in the only path, which by an order of Nature divinely established, leads to them. Thus he arraigns either the goodness of God in not designing, or the wisdom of God in not appointing suitable means for his happiness. Now, as God would not be God, if any one of his perfections were taken away; he who denies one of them, cannot acknowledge God as God. But God, who infinitely loves himself, and who has formed rational beings, that he might reveal to them his perfections, cannot be indifferent, whether they are acknowledged or denied, and must consider the denial of them as injurious to him, though from his infinite happiness it cannot be hurtful.—It is objected by

\* See Cumberland de leg. nat. c. 1. § 26. and c. 5. § 35. and especially § 42.



Eberhard, sect. 8. "Bad conduct occasioned by  
 " an error in the understanding, and not a mali-  
 " cious intention, is not an injury : and that is  
 " his case who has no design to hurt God." But,  
 where mistakes might, and should have been a-  
 voided, he who negligently or rashly adopts them,  
 is accountable for the natural consequences : so  
 that where there is ability and obligation to know  
 a duty, the injury occasioned by ignorance of that  
 duty, is justly imputable. If the laws of Nature  
 may be known, man is bound to trace them out :  
 his not doing it is culpable, and he is answerable  
 for the consequences of such neglect.

But, " May not God forgive an injury, restore  
 " the offender to favour, or at least to a capacity  
 " of the happiness of which he was capable be-  
 " fore he offended ? May he not do this without  
 " any satisfaction, merely on account of the of-  
 " fender's repentance and reformation ?" This  
 question consists of two branches. 1. " Can  
 " God dissolve the connexion, which he has wise-  
 " ly established between moral and natural evil ?"  
 2. " Can he consider the injury done him in de-  
 " nying his perfections, as if it had not been  
 " done ?" Both these questions suppose, what hi-  
 therto hath not been proven, that the sinner, feel-  
 ing and apprehending the consequences of sin,  
 may by his natural powers repent and reform.  
 They therefore assume and argue from a princi-  
 ple which their opponents will not allow : for if  
 repentance flows from the gracious influences of  
 the Spirit, repentance cannot be the condition of  
 these influences, or of the grace which bestows  
 them, unless an effect can be prior to, and can pro-  
 duce its cause. The question therefore must be  
 stated

stated more fairly. “ Is it consistent with God’s  
 “ perfections, that he restore to his favour and  
 “ image, without any satisfaction, one who has  
 “ willingly, perhaps obstinately forsaken his du-  
 “ ty ?” If reason cannot show that there are per-  
 fections in God which necessitate this, the ques-  
 tion must remain undecided : If reason can show  
 that there are perfections in God, with which such  
 favour is incompatible, the question must be an-  
 swered in the negative.

Let us however allow our adversaries, what  
 they can never prove, that a sinner may repent  
 without the gracious influences of the Spirit.

1. Then, “ Can God dissolve the connexion,  
 “ which his wisdom and goodness hath establish-  
 “ ed between moral and natural evil, whenever  
 “ an offender sorrows and repents ?” One who  
 has deviated from duty, and done many things  
 opposite to Nature’s laws, feels in soul and in bo-  
 dy the wretched consequences of his transgressions.  
 He has despised the wisdom, and abused  
 the goodness of God, hurt his fellow men, and  
 disturbed his own tranquillity. Consciousness of  
 all this excites fear, vexation, peevishness, and in-  
 disposition to many duties. He reflects that he  
 has not yielded due honour and love and obedience  
 to the Supreme Being, in whose favour alone  
 happiness can be enjoyed. The more he considers  
 the aggravating circumstances of his transgressions,  
 the more conscience becomes his accuser and tor-  
 mentor. His apprehensions increase, as his dis-  
 coveries of the connexion between vice and mi-  
 sery grow clearer. Yet his love for happiness  
 remains : and the more strongly he feels that  
 love, the deeper is his anguish. The thought  
 that

that a connexion is established, which opposes the happiness of such an offender, produces depression of mind, wrath, despair. These emotions affect the animal spirits and the nervous system, and deprive him of former vigour and cheerfulness. Some of his sins have immediately injured his health. He groans under their painful consequences, and justly dreads, that they shall end only with his life. Though his conduct is changed, disease still punishes his drunkenness and debauchery; and pinching poverty his extravagance. Sensible that he cannot alter the natural connexions of things, and remove the baneful consequences of his faulty conduct, he turns to Him who alone can remove them, with deep remorse and sincere resolutions of amendment. If God can and will take away that connexion of moral and natural evil, which makes him wretched, he is again happy. This may be expected, from the God who always acts consistently with his wisdom and righteousness, if "pardon and restoration to happiness as necessarily flow from repentance, as natural evil flows from moral." Let us examine if that is the case.

What then is the good which naturally flows from a sorrowful sense of former criminal conduct, and from a return to the paths of duty? By viewing sin as it really is, and by the pain accompanying such a view, the understanding is improved, and sets before the will a strong motive to avoid moral evil for the future. By ceasing to do evil, and resuming the interrupted task of duty, the natural good connected with the practice of virtue is again felt. Still, however, the good deeds of the penitent render not undone the  
the

the crimes which he formerly committed, and dissolve not the established connexion between these crimes and natural evil. Pardon and the recovery of lost innocence and bliss, are no natural consequences of these good deeds, and can only be founded on a supernatural divine interposition.—If you plead, that “such interposition is possible, and even necessary from the infinite goodness of God, who loves his creatures, designs their happiness, and therefore will not suffer them to remain miserable:” the reply is easy. God wills the happiness of his creatures, by that temper and practice with which he has connected happiness. He wills it not absolutely. If he did, the connexion between moral and natural evil would not take place: misery could not flow from forsaking the path of virtue; and happiness must be equally the portion of the bad as of the good. If therefore we view the case of the penitent in the most favourable light, his happiness must be impaired by feeling the misery resulting from his former crimes: unless God, for wise and just reasons, remove that misery.

Less need be said on the second branch of the question, viz.

2. “Can God view the injury done him by the denial of his perfections, as not done?”

God loves his own perfections, and therefore loves that rational beings to whom they are revealed should love them, and act under their influence. He cannot therefore be indifferent to this particular in their character and conduct. He must hate a temper and behaviour which indicates the denial, contempt or hatred of these perfections. Be it so, that repentance moves him to reward the virtues it produces; it cannot however



however prevent his remembering the vices previous to it. It cannot lead him to consider and treat the reformed, as those who had never deviated from duty.

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Hitherto we have considered God as the creator and preserver of rational beings, and as placing them in a situation in which their happiness or misery naturally results from their own conduct. —Let us now consider the Supreme Being as entitled to prescribe laws to his creatures, and to enforce their unlimited obedience, not only by the natural consequences of their actions, but by pleasant or painful sensations, produced by causes unconnected with these actions. —The question then will be, “Can God deny these rewards to the obedient, and free from these punishments the transgressor, without any satisfaction?”

How absurd a state of the question? will my reader exclaim: “Deny rewards to the obedient?” —Not absurd or unfair. Rewarding and punishing are branches of the same rectoral justice: and if that is not essential to God, there may be wise reasons for rewards ceasing in some cases, as well as punishments in others. If rectoral justice is necessary in Deity, both branches of that justice are necessary: if otherwise, neither of them is necessary; for what is affirmed or denied of the whole, must be affirmed or denied of all the parts. —But, a more direct proof of the necessity of vindictive justice is easy. God does no injury to the sinner, in not removing by a miracle the natural consequences of sin. His wisdom and truth require, that he should show himself such a Being, as by reason and conscience he hath declared.



ed himself to moral agents. His holiness requires the discouraging any contempt of his perfections and authority. Indeed, for discouraging and avenging it, punishments have been inflicted, which, had it been consistent with his other perfections, his goodness would not have permitted. His goodness only requires, his bestowing so much happiness on his creatures, as his own holiness and wisdom, and their natures admit. Now these require his refusing his approbation to rebellious subjects, who have disregarded his commands, and disturbed the order of the universe, and his treating them as those whom he disapproves. Now reformation renders not undone the evil formerly done, and therefore disarms not justice of its power to punish. All hope however is not cut off; for Divine wisdom can contrive, and Divine power accomplish any thing, which implies not a natural or a moral contradiction.

Here permit me to insert a few reflections from Dr Adam Smith's 'Theory of Moral Sentiments, 3d edit. Lon. 1767, P. 2. § 2. p. 157—160.

“ That the Deity loves virtue and hates vice,  
 “ as a voluptuous man loves riches and hates poverty, not for their own sakes, but for the effects which they tend to produce; that he loves  
 “ the one, only because it promotes the happiness  
 “ of society, which his benevolence prompts him  
 “ to desire; and that he hates the other, only because it occasions the misery of mankind, which  
 “ the same divine quality renders the object of  
 “ his aversion; is not the doctrine of untaught  
 “ nature, but of an artificial refinement of reason  
 “ and philosophy. Our untaught natural sentiments all prompt us to believe, that as perfect  
 “ virtue

“ virtue is supposed necessarily to appear to the  
 “ Deity, as it does to us, for its own sake, and  
 “ without any further view, the natural and pro-  
 “ per object of love and reward; so must vice, of  
 “ hatred and punishment. That the gods neither  
 “ resent nor hurt, was the general maxim of all  
 “ the sects of the ancient philosophy; and if, by  
 “ resenting, be understood, that violent and dis-  
 “ orderly perturbation, which often distracts and  
 “ confounds the human breast; or if, by hurting,  
 “ be understood, the doing mischief wantonly,  
 “ and without regard to propriety or justice, such  
 “ weakness is undoubtedly unworthy of the Divine  
 “ perfection. But if it be meant, that vice does  
 “ not appear to the Deity to be, for its own sake,  
 “ the object of abhorrence and aversion, and  
 “ what, for its own sake, it is fit and right should  
 “ be punished; the truth of this maxim seems re-  
 “ pugnant to some very natural feelings. If we  
 “ consult our natural sentiments, we are even apt  
 “ to fear, lest, before the holiness of God, vice  
 “ should appear to be more worthy of punish-  
 “ ment, than the weakness and imperfection of  
 “ human virtue can ever seem to be of reward.  
 “ Man, when about to appear before a Being of  
 “ infinite perfection, can feel but little confidence  
 “ in his own merit, or in the imperfect propriety  
 “ of his own conduct. In the presence of his fel-  
 “ low-creatures, he may even justly elevate him-  
 “ self, and may often have reason to think highly  
 “ of his own character and conduct, compared  
 “ to the still greater imperfection of theirs. But  
 “ the case is quite different, when about to appear  
 “ before his infinite Creator. To such a Being,  
 “ he fears, that his littleness and weakness can  
 “ scarce

“ scarce ever appear the proper object, either of  
 “ esteem or of reward. But he can easily con-  
 “ ceive, how the numberless violations of duty,  
 “ of which he has been guilty, should render him  
 “ the proper object of aversion and punishment;  
 “ and he thinks he can see no reason why the Di-  
 “ vine indignation should not be let loose, with-  
 “ out any restraint, upon so vile an insect as he  
 “ imagines that he himself must appear to be.  
 “ If he would still hope for happiness, he sus-  
 “ pects that he cannot demand it from the justice,  
 “ but that he must entreat it from the mercy of  
 “ God. Repentance, sorrow, humiliation, con-  
 “ trition at the thought of his past conduct, seem,  
 “ upon this account, the sentiments which be-  
 “ come him, and to be the only means which he  
 “ has left for appeasing that wrath which he  
 “ knows he has justly provoked. He even dis-  
 “ trusts the efficacy of all these, and naturally  
 “ fears, lest the wisdom of God should not, like  
 “ the weakness of man, be prevailed upon to  
 “ spare the crime, by the most importunate la-  
 “ mentations of the criminal. Some other inter-  
 “ cession, some other sacrifice, some other atone-  
 “ ment, he imagines must be made for him, be-  
 “ yond what he himself is capable of making,  
 “ before the purity of the Divine justice can be  
 “ reconciled to his manifold offences. The doc-  
 “ trines of revelation coincide in every respect  
 “ with those original anticipations of nature;  
 “ and, as they teach us how little we can depend  
 “ upon the imperfection of our own virtue, so  
 “ they show us, at the same time, that the most  
 “ powerful intercession has been made, and that  
 “ the most dreadful atonement has been paid for  
 “ our

“our manifold transgressions and iniquities.”—  
Thus far Dr Smith.

The result is—The perfections of God, considered as a lawgiver, forbid his freeing from punishment merely on remorse and reformation, unless the threatened punishment is endured, and the neglected obedience performed by another, as they cannot be done by the transgressor himself. Our natural feelings suggest fears, that he who is holiness itself, will judge our vices infinitely more worthy of punishment, than our weak imperfect virtue is worthy of reward; and that some atonement, greater than the sinner can make, is necessary to expiate his guilt. Though, therefore, in one view, God may be considered as a creditor, and the sinner as a debtor, it follows not, that this debt may be discharged without payment.

Now, if a satisfaction is necessary, the ends for which the wisdom and holiness of God require it, are attained, though atonement is made, and obedience performed by another than the offender; and it is worthy of God, to save by an imputed righteousness, him who could not not have been saved by his own. Satisfaction is required, that the violated honour of God may be repaired, and the injury done him suitably punished, though the doer of the injury is restored to former rectitude and happiness. Our adversaries falsely argue, that the necessity of a satisfaction can only rest on the advantage mankind derive, from the honour of God's government being maintained, and virtuous conduct promoted. These, however, being designs of a satisfaction, though not the only ones; and our adversaries denying that these designs can be  
accomplished



accomplished by imputing to the sinner the sufferings and merits of another; we will follow the thread of their reasonings.

God punishes, not from delight in making his creatures miserable, but for repairing the violated honour of his perfections; a good, greater than the evil of their sufferings. Punishment, therefore, may be inflicted or prolonged, though the transgressor is reformed; and so great a fear and aversion for vice produced in others, as should prevent their committing it: if only these outward ends of punishment, and not the inward ends of it, are obtained. Future respect for, and subjection to God, being due every moment on its own account, cannot atone for the injury of former irreverence and rebellion. We are bound to employ all our time and our powers in the service of God. Having once neglected it, we have afterwards no time nor power for repairing that neglect, unless we absurdly suppose, that the Supreme Being looses the penitent for some time from his original obligation to obedience, that he may improve that time for repairing past neglects. If, therefore, satisfaction is made, it must be made by another, not by the sinner himself.

But, "Can justice accept an atonement which reforms not the transgressor, and which unprofitably punishes the innocent?" It is said, not proven, that punishment endured by another, cannot amend a malefactor. We are told, that a bare speculation is not sufficient to bind the will. Be it so. The believer's views of his Surety's sufferings, are not bare speculations. The atonement, when rightly understood, and firmly believed, restores light to the understanding, and holiness.



holiness to the heart. Even on that account, the suffering of the innocent surely is not unprofitable. Neither is it unjust, if he has a right to substitute himself in place of another, and voluntarily does it. Indeed a surety thus able and willing, reason cannot reveal.

The Christian philosopher consults therefore his Bible, where he finds the powerful practical influence of that doctrine of the atonement, which opposes to traduce as empty speculation, and that though the surety was innocent, his punishment was not useless. I hear the testimony of Paul, *2 Cor. v. 14, 15.* "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." I next fix my eyes on the woman who was a sinner, and, because much was forgiven her, loved much. *Luke vii. 36—47.* I then attend to Peter exhorting Christians, *1 Peter i. 18.*, to the diligent practice of virtue, because they were redeemed from their vain conversation, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. Here we see believing views of the suretyship-sufferings of Christ powerfully influencing the dispositions and conduct. Indeed, the principles of human nature, and common experience shew, how facts of this kind affect the heart and life. He who believes, that God, on account of the righteousness of Christ, blots out his iniquities, receives him into favour, and treats him as a son; though sin is in itself so abominable, and its guilt so heinous, that the  
only

only Begotten of the Father must suffer inexpressible anguish to purchase its pardon; he who believes all this, naturally feels a warm love and gratitude to him who spared not his own Son, but delivered him to the death; an aversion from the sins, for which his surety was so severely punished; and a zeal, henceforth to walk in the paths of virtue. Men who believe not the truths from which such emotions flow, are incompetent judges of their practical influence. I may imagine how I would be affected, if I believed a proposition or story which I am conscious I believe not. But my imaginations may be delusive, like those of the poor man, who fancies how generous he would be, if he were rich. The enemies therefore of the doctrine of the atonement, in denying its practical tendency, decide in a cause, which, want of experience disqualifies them for judging. Indeed, that love to God, which arises from a sense, that he who is justly and infinitely displeased at our guilt, is willing, through the merits of the Redeemer, to make us completely happy: that love enlivens every virtuous resolution, strengthens for encountering with success criminal inclinations, fills the heart with benevolence to our fellow-men, ennobles our aims, and renders the restraints of duty pleasant. Happiness is found even in difficult exertions: and in the paths of a grateful obedience, a peace which passeth understanding, filleth the soul. It is not surprising, that the unbeliever feels not these influences. How should the effect exist without the cause? It is enough, that when the understanding is enlightened, and men believe by grace, then also the heart is purified. Besides, the atone-

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ment,

ment, which purchases pardoning mercy, purchases also sanctifying grace, and thus produces the reformation of the offender, and kindles again his extinguished love to virtue. This shall be proven in the next section. In the mean time, though the doctrine of regeneration were left out of the question, it would not follow, that regard to virtue is not promoted by the doctrine of the atonement, and that man receives no benefit from it. The return to virtue, and pardon of past vices, are as little connected as the ceasing to contract new debts, and the discharge of old ones. If, therefore, the atonement of Christ secures the penitent sinner from the painful consequences of his past transgressions; even in that view, separately considered, it is not useless.——But I go further. If, through an atonement, the Supreme Being discovers his aversion to moral evil, illustriously displays his love to sinners, and bestows benefits on men, which his perfections would not otherwise have permitted him to bestow: then, the doctrine of an atonement, promotes the honour of his government, and maintains respect for righteousness and good order. Now, God testifies displeasure against sin, in punishing a surety, who voluntarily undertakes to bear for others the consequences of that displeasure. For they who know, that being himself innocent, he suffers only on account of crimes, whose consequences he has taken upon him; must equally know, that these crimes, not his innocent person, are the objects of the Divine displeasure. When, one in himself perfectly holy, and well pleasing in the sight of God, suffers in the room of sinners; the Divine hatred of sin  
more

more clearly appears, than if the sinner himself had suffered, who, on account of his moral depravity, is an object of God's displeasure. When, the Supreme Being, rather than forgive sin without a satisfaction, punishes it in a surety, with whom, in himself considered, he was perfectly well pleased, his hatred of moral evil must be infinite : for, even the interposition of one who was the object of his love and delight, unless he suffer what the offender merited, cannot free him from suffering. How alarming a consideration to those who obstinately go on in their trespasses ! What have they cause to dread, whose temper and conduct God abhors, when one holy and dear to God so bitterly feels the effects of vindictive justice ! If the rights of his perfections and government are so strictly maintained ; how carefully should they guard against sin, who would not bring on themselves the dreadful vengeance of the Almighty ! A satisfaction, therefore, promotes the dignity of God's government, and secures reverence for justice and good order.—It were easy to apply all this to the Scripture account of Christ's suretiship sufferings ; and to show, that these tend to promote virtue, as well as the example and laws of Christ do, and the declarations that they only in the great day shall be absolved through his blood, whose conduct has testified the sincerity of their faith.

We have formerly shown, that, beside the external ends of an atonement, the justice of God must be thereby satisfied, the obedience required by the law fulfilled, and the penalty threatened against transgressors endured, before the offender is again restored to God's favour ; and, now,  
 Scripture



Scripture declares, that the sufferings and merits of Christ have done all this. Hear what Paul testifies of Christ, *Rom. iii. 25, 26.* "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins; that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth on Jesus." God remains just, and discovers his justice in the forgiveness of sin; for Jesus, by his propitiation, has borne the penal consequences of sin: so that justice has no more to demand from the sinner. Sin had been formerly dreadfully punished; yet not so as fully to satisfy these demands, and to manifest how greatly God abhors it. The curse on the earth, the miseries of human life, the old world destroyed by a flood, were effects of God's wrath. Yet, with reverence be it spoken, they were only small sparks from a consuming fire. They were far from satisfying Divine justice. That, Jesus alone hath done.

But, how Jesus? Shall one man accomplish what was impossible for all the world, yea for a thousand worlds?—Yes. He, and he alone, hath satisfied Divine justice. God hath caused him to suffer, in body and in soul, all the consequences of his indignation against sin. He hath borne the threatened punishment; and therefore justice, thus satisfied, inflicts it not on those for whom he bore it. Hence the Divine perfections hinder not such favour being shown to the sinner, as if he had never sinned. How Jesus bore our sins, in his own body, on the tree; and how he gave his soul a ransom for them; I cannot perfectly comprehend. But I know enough, to say Amen to the words of my crucified Saviour, *It is finished.*



*finished.*——If you ask, what I know? I reply, 1. The Son of God, in consequence of his Divine nature, was able to bear the effects of God's infinite displeasure at moral evil. 2. Hence he could endure, in a short period, what could not have been endured by the sinner in millions of ages. The finite nature of a rebellious creature, subjects him indeed to eternal punishment: but, instead of inferring from thence, that he who was God as well as man, if he suffered for mankind, must be eternally punished; we have ground to infer the reverse. The whole life of Christ was so designed and directed for the salvation of sinners, as confirms my belief, that he not only bore the penalty of a broken law, but performed for believers the obedience it demanded.

Ere we conclude, the force of two objections against this doctrine must be examined.——“ Can justice allow the uselessly punishing the innocent?” No. But the sufferings which Jesus as our surety endured, were not useless, and therefore cannot by that medium be proven unjust.——But you urge, that “ the innocent who offers to suffer, acts inconsistently with his duty; and that therefore God cannot justly accept his offer, and punish him\*.” We reply: Justice forbids

\* The argument stated here, against the doctrine of the atonement, involves an evident absurdity. That doctrine, whether true or false, of necessity supposes that the voluntary sacrifice of Christ was an act of obedience to the Father, and the highest act of obedience of which we can form a conception. To affirm that that could violate duty to God, which was a direct act of obedience to him, which both merited and received the greatest reward, is so glaring an absurdity, that it scarcely deserves a serious refutation. “ I have power to lay down my life, and I have  
“ power

forbids not to punish one who has right and inclination to subject himself to punishment instead of another; especially when, by accepting such an offer, goodness and mercy are displayed. Was then any duty violated, or was any right unwarrantably assumed, by Jesus engaging to suffer for sinners? — Was such an undertaking inconsistent with his duty to God, to himself, or to his neighbour? — Duties to God he could not violate, by that which entitled him to say, “ Father ! I have glorified thee on earth, and finished the work which thou gavest me to do ;” by that which procured him the testimony from Heaven, “ Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ;” by that which the Father rewarded, in his resurrection from the dead, sitting at the right hand of God, receiving all power in heaven and in earth, and being appointed Judge of angels and men. Far from violating his duty to God, he glorified God, by giving the most convincing evidence, in what he suffered, of God’s indignation at moral evil; while he displayed, in the clearest manner, the riches of his love and grace, and laid the foundation for an innumerable multitude of souls, once ready to perish, glorifying and praising God through all eternity. — Neither

“ power to take it again. And this commandment I have received of my Father, “ He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.”

If men shall reason against the doctrine of atonement, assuming it as a fact, that the death of Christ was not an act of obedience to the Father; it is not the doctrine of Calvinists which they combat, but a doctrine of their own creation, which no theologian has ever adopted, or attempted to defend. — *For this Note the Translator is indebted to a Friend.*

did

did Jesus, by his atoning sufferings, violate his duty to himself; for, by these sufferings, his happiness as man was afterwards increased, though his happiness as God could not. It was on account of these sufferings God highly exalted him, gave him a name above every name, and assigned him the Heathen for an inheritance, and the utmost ends of the earth for a possession. If we consider Jesus as the Son of God, it is evident that he had power to subject his assumed human nature to these sufferings, and that his original honour and bliss were not thereby impaired.—

—Lastly, His atonement, far from violating, gloriously fulfilled his obligations to his neighbour. It would be affronting my readers, formally to prove, that Christ exercised love to his neighbour, in purchasing for fallen men the forgiveness of sin; in restoring them to the favour and image of God; and in perfectly securing their happiness, for time, and for eternity.— Upon the whole: The punishment of Jesus was not useless. In submitting himself to it, he violated no obligation of duty. God, in approving, accepting, and even inflicting his sufferings, was not unjust. Reason indeed could not discover this atonement. But, now that it is revealed, Reason shows, that it is not opposite to the Divine rectitude. I acknowledge God hath said, *The children shall not die for the iniquities of the fathers; the soul that sinneth shall die.* But that is spoken of a whole nation, not suffering for the sins of their forefathers, when they imitate them not; and therefore applies not to the present case. It is also true, that God refused to blot Moses out of his book, instead of the offending Israelites. But that substitution could  
not

not have taken place without the misery of the generous Moses; and besides, could not have accomplished the purpose he intended by offering it. It cannot be proven, that God is restrained by his perfections, from accepting a substitution in one instance, because in another he has refused it. The refusing an offer which would have obscured, will not infer a necessity of refusing an offer which manifests the Divine glory.

But, “ according to the doctrine of an atonement, God suddenly passes from one extreme to another, even from the greatest hatred to the greatest favour, the objects of these opposite affections remaining the same. Whereas, by the Socinian scheme, the favour of God is exactly proportioned to the dispositions and conduct of men.”—The last assertion I may be excused from examining, after what I have already said on the consequences of remorse and amendment, and what will fall more properly to be considered in the following section, on the necessity of supernatural influence. The first assertion is founded on this reasoning: “ The hypothesis which admits a sudden unaccountable transition from one extreme to another, must be rejected: Now, such a transition is supposed in the doctrine of atonement: That doctrine therefore must be rejected.” Though we might show that the major proposition is often false, we shall allow it, and argue from the principles of our opposers. According to the Wolfian philosophy, an absolute and sudden transition from one extreme to another, without passing through that which intervenes, arises, not from the length or shortness of time in which a change takes place, but from want

want of a sufficient reason in the first state to produce the second. The impossibility of such a transition cannot be objected to the doctrine of atonement, unless that doctrine exhibits God, without sufficient reason, vouchsafing his favour to a sinner, who, the preceding moment, was the object of his displeasure. Now there is a sufficient reason for that transition, even the righteousness of the surety, received by and imputed to the believer, and equally imputed to all who believe. Though, however, all are equally pardoned and justified, the complacency of God in believers is greater, according to their various degrees of holiness in heart and life. A transition sudden only in a relative sense, a change effectuated more rapidly, than changes at other times, and in other cases usually are, as the Wolfian philosophy allows, often takes place: and therefore, such a change cannot be justly objected to the doctrine of atonement.

### N U M B E R    I I I.

*Brieven van Eenige Jooden over den tegenwoordigen toestand van der Christelyken Godsdienst. In licht gegeven, door C. V. S. Harlem, 1786, n. p. 356.*  
i. e. Letters from certain Jews, on the present State of the Christian religion.

P. 1.—6. **L**ETTER from Jos. de L. to Israel C. Amsterdam, 29th June 1784.—  
Many thanks for your kind entertainment and tender sympathy. Often I was about to unbosom myself to you, when, during my late visit, you a-  
† E gain



again and again enquired the cause of my depression. I now venture it. Have pity on me, and examine what is truth, before you injure yourself and me. One day I overheard your worthy gardener, William, tell another Christian servant, that the sermon that morning had been on these words, *Ye have killed the Prince of Life*. Fears, what would become of me, if that was true, so agitated me the whole night, that after a short and suddenly interrupted sleep, I arose early to walk in your garden. There, I soon met William, who, with honest and undissembled goodness, asked me, What vexes you? Often, when you imagined you was not seen, I have observed you in the garden, sighing, wringing your hands, and lifting up your eyes to Heaven. Are you unhappy? —As wretched as possible. —How, Sir? You are a man of fortune, and being unmarried, have no family distress. —Yes; but I am a Jew. —Well, you are not an ace the worse on that account. Thousands of your nation live merrily. —But, if it is true, that your minister preached yesterday! —William, leaping back some paces, asked, full of surprize, How know you what my minister preached? —I heard you tell it yesterday to John. —Well, but with the same breath, Peter told his countrymen, Now brethren, I know that through ignorance you did it. —Be it so, dear William. My forefathers did it through ignorance. But I, who see stronger proofs of your religion around me, and even in my own wandering and depressed nation, am less excusable. —Yet the Prince of Life prayed for his murderers, and commanded, that to them first remission of sins should be preached. You are of the nation  
beloved

beloved for the Father's sake.—He would have said more, when, seeing you, he broke off, and whispered in my ear, My Jesus loves even his murderers.—Soon after, as I was stepping into a scoot, I stumbled, and probably should have been drowned, had not the minister of the village (whom I had the day before, against my conscience, joined you in ridiculing), caught hold of me with his hand. Honest man, said I, what virtue is this, to rescue from death one of a nation which killed your Prince of Life? He kindly replied, My Master loves even his murderers. I cannot express what I felt, when I heard these words repeated, and what anxiety has filled my mind ever since.

P. 7.—9. Israel C. to Jos. de L. Maarsen, 6th July 1784.—I am happy you have discovered your fanaticism to me, and to no other. Leave it to the learned to discuss, whether the religion of Moses or Jesus, or Mahomet, is the best; and if I may have money, and wine and pleasure, I laugh at our Rabbis cursing those who turn Christians.—I lately had a letter from my nephew Sam. C. at London, with Priestley's Institutes, and history of the corruptions of Christianity. The man expressly says, that the idolatry of Christians began with deifying Jesus. Jesus was once in high credit. The stocks are now falling. If they fall a little lower, the Infidels, in a few years, shall canonize Caiaphas for condemning him as a blasphemer and impostor. This evening I drink your health and Dr Priestley's in good champagne.

P. 10.—22. Sam. C. to Isr. C. London, 22d June 1784.—I have not a good New Testament, or I cannot read it, if Jesus did not exhibit him-

self to his countrymen as the true God. When they concluded from his calling God his father, that he made himself equal with God, he did not recal or limit his words, or give them a sense less idolatrous. His observing that these were called gods to whom the word of God came, is no more placing himself in the same rank with the Jewish magistrates, than my telling one about to strike me, that Balaam must not strike his ass unjustly, was putting myself on a level with Balaam's ass. I and the Father are one, the Father is in me and I in him, were expressions too strong to be left unexplained. Christians are now styling him, as our fathers did, the Son of the Carpenter. Thus truth prevails. By and by, the nations shall applaud the zeal, which condemned him for claiming divine honours, levy armies to recover for us the holy land, rebuild our temple, and restore our worship; and among our friends and deliverers, with the names of Moses, Joshua and Zerobabel, those too of Julian and Priestley shall be recorded with honour.

P. 20.—54. Jos. de L. to Ifr. C. Rotterdam 20th July 1784. Perhaps my thoughts of religion are too gloomy. But I fear yours are rash, rather than considerate. Will God excuse our leaving religion to the learned? Is it of small importance, whether Moses and Jesus were impostors or ambassadors of heaven? If the last, is he in no danger who rejects either or both? I have long known that Christians think differently about Jesus, and therefore Priestley's books surprize me not. The dignity of Christ, however, is as little affected by this, as Moses's character was by the rebellion of Korah. The lawful authority of

a king ceaseth not, when some of his subjects dispute it, or take up arms against it. Men's maintaining or denying that Jesus was sent of God, or was the Son of God, prove nothing either way. Yet, from carefully reading the New Testament, which I tell you in confidence I have done, I wonder that any who would be accounted candid, should assert without blushing, that Jesus assumed no higher character than that of an excellent man. Our law forbids giving to any creature the honour due to God alone. For transgressing that law, the ten tribes were led captive to Assyria, and Judah to Babylon. When the Jews, restored again to their own land, remembering their severe, though just punishment, abhorred idolatry, and cleaved to their covenant God; we cannot suppose, that he would lay snares for them, and expose them to the hazard of again worshipping a mere creature. Every word or action, which seemed to approve this, would be avoided by a divine messenger. It has been pled, that when Jesus termed himself the Son of God, meaning that he was God's friend and favourite, the Jews maliciously interpreting his words in a higher sense, was no reason for his denying his Sonship. But surely, if he came to bear witness to the truth, it was his duty to explain words, when a blasphemous meaning was put upon them, which he never intended. When the Lystrians were about to offer sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, these disciples of Jesus remonstrated that they were but men. But Jesus himself did not thus rebuke Thomas when he said, My Lord and my God: or Peter, when he said, Lord thou knowest all things. His asking a young man, Why callest



callest thou me good? there is none good save  
 one, that is God; cannot be construed as declin-  
 ing Divine honour: for the young man, in calling  
 him good Master, had no design to bestow it.  
 John, 1 *Ep.* v. 20. styles Jesus the true God and  
 eternal life, in plain and simple language, and in  
 immediate connexion with a warning, Little chil-  
 dren keep yourselves from idols. The Apostles  
 describe him as Author of Nature *Jo.* i. 1, 2, 3.  
*Heb.* i. 3. *Eph.* iii. 9. *Col.* i. 16. where the same  
 elevated expressions are used, which Paul uses  
 with respect to the Supreme God, *Rom.* xi. 36.  
 They represent him as before all things, *Col.* i. 17.;  
 as omniscient, *Jo.* ii. 25.; as asserting his own om-  
 nipresence, *Matth.* xviii. 20; xxviii. 20. Yea  
 they scruple not to call him God, *Jo.* i. 1. God  
 over all blessed for ever, *Rom.* ix. 5. He speaks  
 of himself, *Jo.* xiv. 28. *Matth.* xxiv. 36. *Jo.* v.  
 17. 30. as inferior to the father, and ignorant of  
 some things. In other texts, he represents him-  
 self, or is represented by his apostles, as equal to  
 the Father, and knowing all things. If one sect  
 of Christians is entitled to plead that the first class  
 of texts should be understood in the fullest sense,  
 and without limitation, with equal justice ano-  
 ther sect may plead the same mode of interpreting  
 the last class. All sects of Christians are concern-  
 ed to reconcile these seemingly opposite accounts  
 of the person of Christ; and reconcile them they  
 cannot, unless, in the last class, the New Testa-  
 ment speaks of Christ as true God, and in the  
 first as the Father's ambassador and true man. In  
 vain is it urged, that Jesus only termed himself  
 God, or Son of God, in the sense in which ma-  
 gistrates have these titles, *Pf.* lxxii. When our  
 forefathers



forefathers interpreted his words, *Jo.* v. 17. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work, as a claiming equality with God; instead of charging them with mistaking his meaning, he tells them that he did like works with the Father, *v.* 19.—21.; that he was entitled to like honour, *v.* 23.; and existed and lived in the same manner, *v.* 26. If he was not God, this was repeatedly insinuating a comparison shockingly profane. When his saying, *Jo.* vi. 42. I came down from Heaven, gave offence, as an ascribing to himself something more than human: he immediately asserts, *v.* 46, that he was of God, and had seen the Father. When he spoke of the Father, and was asked, *Jo.* viii. 19. Where is thy Father? Did he mean to inflame the fury of his enemies, by these solemn words, *v.* 58, Verily, verily I say to you, before Abraham was, I am? This was not speaking so plainly, as to deprive them of all handle, for accusing him of blasphemy. At least it was time to speak out, when, upon his confession before the Sanhedrim, I am the Son of God, they unanimously condemned him; because in these words, he, being a man, made himself equal with God. His honour required, that he should not die as one, who at least seemed to have arrogated to himself divine honours. The apostles preached Jesus to Jews, with whom idolatry was treason against God and their constitution; and to heathens strongly attached to idolatry: to both, in a manner shamefully imprudent, if they meant not that their master should be worshipped as God. I see not, therefore, how Dr Priestley's scheme should pave the way for our nation's becoming Christian. He cannot remove their offence at a crucified man  
being

being represented as God, unless by keeping from them the books of the New Testament, and persuading them to believe, on his authority, a different account of the doctrine of Jesus than is there exhibited. One, who, though only the Son of Mary, assumed to himself divine honour, whatever other works of the Messiah apply to him, must be an impostor. But, if he is indeed a divine person, this fulfils the expectations which the Old Testament raised of the Messiah, as God with us, and the Lord our righteousness. If he was not God, the world is indebted to Mahomet, for delivering so great a part of it from the idolatry of honouring him as they honour God: and what shall become of me, if I should acknowledge such a blasphemer as the Messiah? But if he is indeed God, What shall become of me, what shall become of my nation, what shall become of those, who, calling themselves by his name, debase his dignity? Alas! where I hoped to find comfort, I sink in an abyss of doubts. I find a temporary relief in unbosoming to you my perplexity. Yet, alas! how imperfect! My friend laughs at all religion; and what comfort can I expect from him? I sometimes think of writing to your nephew S. C. who is so learned in our religion, and like Moses Mendelszoon seems to have embraced it on examination. May I venture this? Dare I confide in his secrecy and tolerant spirit? Or, is there not danger, lest he expose me? I intreat your advice.

P. 55.—153. Israel C. to Jos. de L. Maarsen, 23d August 1784. After expressing his doubts of all religion, and of a future state; he gives an account of fears of futurity, which he  
had

had felt in a late dangerous illness, and which had vanished on his recovery. He then mentions a curious anecdote. Last year I was in the chamber of a young squire, who, I well knew, was a great lover of gaming, wine, and women. It was hung with a multitude of fine prints, highly calculated to inflame youthful desires. Above his bureau were portraits of some celebrated French courtezans, and above these that of a very modest man, at the right hand of one in an Eastern dress, and, as it seemed, in a religious transport. I stepped near, to see whose portraits the two last were, and observed under the one Mahomet the son of Abdallah, and under the other John Caspar Lavater. I knew the reformer of the Arabians. Astonished to find along with him the fanatic Swifs; How! said I, Mahomet and Lavater, the tutelar saints of a party of court whores? Yes, replied he, young man, I make much of handsome women, and eagerly gratify my inclinations. Meantime, as I must die one time or other, and perhaps may die suddenly, these men give me some encouragement. If Mahomet is in the right, I have a good chance of recovering the pleasures I leave on earth, and enjoying the blue-eyed beauties of paradise, promised to his votaries. But if I should be mistaken in this, and punished for my licentiousness, which indeed I fear, for he who steals must hang; Lavater hath dispelled my dread of that eternal misery about which my aunt Knorr continually rattles, and assured me that all shall be finally happy. Observing that I seemed to doubt if one celebrated as a zealous defender of Christianity, had advanced such sentiments; he pulled from his letter-case an extract, from which, with  
his

his allowance, I transcribed Lavater's words. Uytzichten in de eewigheid, 3 deel. 22 brieff. The Creator cannot hate his creature: and so long as the damned remain creatures, so long God is their Creator. God is love for ever and ever. He is not gracious in time, and cruel through eternity. He cannot say in time, I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but that he repent and live: and yet in eternity punish, without aiming at their reformation. Ascribe not to God, what in a human judge all would account a defect of wisdom and goodness, the punishing for the sake of punishing. It is enough, my Creator! thou art love. Love seeketh not her own; thou seekest the happiness of all, and shouldst thou not then find what thou seekest? Shouldst thou not be able to do, what thou wilst? These expressions are mixed with others, which represent the end of hell punishment as more doubtful, yet, on the whole, rather tend to establish than to confute it. When I was about to leave him; Lavater, cries he, in his day-book \*, which my aunt says is truly spiritual and experimental, prays for the damned, and even the devils. If I die and go to hell, the pious Lavater of Zurich says mass for my soul. I took the freedom to say, If I was disposed to moralize

\* His words, Geheim Dagboek, 1 deel. p. 214. Op den, 26 January 1760, are, "In this pleasant frame my prayers were comprehensive. My family, my friends, my fellow-citizens, my enemies, all Christians, all men, were included in them. I flew to the most distant seas. I penetrated into the deepest mines and dungeons. I embraced in my heart all that is called man; present and future times, and nations; children in their mothers wombs; the dead, the damned, yea Satan himself: I presented them all to God, with the warmest wishes that he would have mercy on them all."



moralize in his fashion, I would rather conclude, man dead, horse dead, all dead. I know, replied he, some of my companions wish to think so. For my part, the most delicious morsel becomes insipid, and I fall a-shivering, when the idea arises, possibly to-morrow thou mayest for ever cease to exist. But if I may credit Lavater, I may thus compute : If God would be a tyrant, did he punish eternally the sins of a few years, then the time of punishment must be proportioned to the time and measure of sinning. In the first six years of my life, I did little or no evil ; I shall however reckon a year for every one of them, *i. e.* six years punishment. The next ten years I lived as most of that age, not remarkably vicious, and not so reserved as a hermit. For each of these I set down two, in whole twenty years of punishment. I so spent my last ten years, that I hardly expect to spend ten more, in the same taste : But, suppose I should, for each of these twenty years I put down a hundred years of punishment, *i. e.* in whole two thousand years. Behold then after a life of pleasure, first two thousand and twenty-six years of pain, and then uninterrupted and eternal happiness. What think you ? Cannot one enjoy what is to be enjoyed of the world, and then heaven also ? This is a trade, where there is no loss. Indeed I relish not the interval of pain, and would willingly leap over it unobserved. But what shall I say ? The thief must hang. Nay, said I, two thousand years of torment, and who knows how horrible ! To tell you the truth, continued he, I was dining of a Sunday with aunt. The lady, who had heard something of her nephew's tricks, began to preach on the abominableness of vice,

and



and on the miseries of the damned. I chanced to say, Who knows if they will be so great? The old woman began to lift up her voice, and to harangue with such vehemence, that I thought she would have burst. When the desert came, she called for the great Bible, put on her spectacles, turned over many a leaf, and then read these words of Jesus, spoken of a miserable sinner, It had been good for that man he had never been born. I will not disguise it. This struck me, and somewhat disturbed my gaiety. But, what happened? Dining with aunt, I must go to church in the afternoon. An able preacher of her denomination mounted the pulpit, and discoursed on the torments of the damned. O, thought I; this is worse upon bad. Never had I such uneasiness from the thing called conscience, as during the first part of the sermon. Fortunately the orator happened to mention the benevolence of the Deity, and instantly a holy zeal diverts him from his subject, to declaim against those who transformed God into a tyrant. Ha! said I in my heart, now we shall hear something exquisitely fine. He spoke of frightful dreams occasioned by thick blood and black gall; of God's design to make all his creatures happy, &c. He concluded as with the decisive voice of an oracle, "The most wretched of hell's inhabitants would  
 "not choose non-existence, rather than his sor-  
 "rows. No! no! The devils themselves would  
 "rather live under the chastening hand of the  
 "common Father of his creatures, than cease to  
 "be. The Creator and Father of us all is love  
 "itself. The heavens rejoice in this love. Earth  
 "is warmed and refreshed with its beams. Even  
 "hell

"hell knows and feels its influence." When the church was dismissed, and in the coach with my aunt, I was applauding the abilities of the preacher: Alas! what I intended to make court to Madam, turned out quite the reverse. Angry and snarling was her answer. I have heard him preach better—But the man now shows himself wholly corrupt. I perceived where the shoe pinched; but, as if I had not perceived it, observed how much the sermon agreed with what she had said at dinner. Agreed! cried she; how dare you say so, nephew? The man expressly contradicts Jesus, who testified of the traitor Judas, that he would choose never to have been born. With this the conversation ended, and I soon left her. And now, my dear friend, one need not sink in despair, though he must endure punishment two thousand years. Something, indeed, very dreadful, is said of Judas. But, as I learned at school, one swallow makes not summer. What think you, Joseph, of this anecdote? Are not Christian preachers, and the priests of Bacchus and Venus nearly allied? Don't they work finely into one another's hands?—Well, I have another story for you, which fully shows, how low ideas some fashionable divines entertain of Christianity. An exchange and counting-house acquaintance was, from his youth, sedate, reserved, and strictly religious. To avoid his sour looks, and sometimes words, and not to forfeit his favour, with which the interest of my house was much connected, I found it needful, in his company, to be very guarded in my conversation. One day, when I was chatting with him at Exchange, a sarcasm on religion happened to escape me. The moment I

uttered it, I began to blush and flutter ; when, casting my eyes upon him, I saw that he entered with pleasure into the wit and profanity of the jest. This surprized me ; for though of late his dress was more gay and finical, I had no suspicion that he was a profelyte of Deism. I soon found an opportunity of feeling his pulse as to religious matters. Having made an appointment to meet him of an evening in his own house on business, I was conducted into his great hall, instead of his counting-chamber. He immediately called for wine, pipes and tobacco, and urged me to spend the evening with him. Though his servants were abundantly alert, he calls to them, What, ye loiterers, do you not remember the words of Jesus, What you do, do quickly ? I stood as if I had been benumbed, and could hardly believe that this was the man who, a little ago, was as grave as a quaker. Observing on his table a fine copy of Voltaire's works, I asked him, if he had read them ? Only, replied he, some detached pieces ; but I have bought the whole, that I may be better acquainted with him. Why, continued he, do you look so strange ? Have I not cause, said I, when I see you so oddly metamorphosed from a fanatic to a freethinker ? How has it happened ? You will be more surprized, said he, when I tell you, that a Christian preacher persuaded me, it was safest to content myself with natural religion. I was educated strictly, and trained up in the gloomy notions of God's wrath, eternal punishments, and the necessity of the new birth. Affrighted with these bugbears, I thought it almost a crime, to go to a coffeehouse, or to cast a squint look on  
a fine

a fine woman. I prayed, read the bible, went to church, lived as a hermit, and yet was a stranger to cheerfulness and serenity. A squire, who observed my depression of spirits, and in a retired walk discovered the cause, presented me with G. S. Steinbart's system of pure philosophy, or doctrine of happiness according to Christianity, and assured me that the author, who had felt like religious tortures, and obtained relief; from love to his fellow men, had pointed out in it the path to happiness. Lo, there, says he, is the book that converted me. Has then, enquired I, this Christian guide to happiness, convinced you that happiness is not to be found in Christianity? No, replied he, the man is no enemy to Christianity, and shews that it points out the path to happiness. Only, he is fair enough to say, that the religion of Nature does so too. Now, as this last is incontestibly certain, and the first depends on historical evidence, I choose to follow the last guide, which Steinbart assures me I may do without material hurt. I will give you a copy of some extracts I made from him for my own use. § 50. Man has, in his spiritual and moral nature, a capacity for, and a guide to happiness. The opinion that human nature was corrupted by Adam's fall, is derived from the idea of the material propagation of the soul; dishonours the Divine goodness and holiness, and weakens the operations of conscience. § 52. Equally absurd is the doctrine of man's total inability, and the necessity of Divine influence for every good thought and action § 20. Acting wisely is more common among mankind, than acting foolishly and sinfully. Profligates do a hundred good actions, for one bad action: and even



in the most shocking crimes, taken in their connexion, the good sometimes exceeds the bad. § 98. The doctrine of happiness creates no new powers, and bestows no new advantages. It only teaches, such improvement of these, derived from nature, or our outward circumstances, as may promote our present and future welfare. § 32, 35, 40. Christianity teaches the most perfect system of morals, and guide to happiness; enforces every natural motive to virtue, and adds new ones. § 96. Yet unity of sentiment suits not the divine plan of man's moral improvement. A diversity of religion is better adapted both for mankind in general, and for individuals. The most absurd and superstitious religions were profitable; for they promoted the common end of all religion, peace of conscience, and the practice of virtue. § 97. All religions lead to happiness, though some by a shorter, safer, and less difficult road than others. § 31, 32, 34, 39, 82. Pure Christianity is taught by the nature of things, though it was taught by Christ and his apostles, with a plainness better suited to every capacity. The chief advantage, however, of their instructions was, the rooting out all ideas of arbitrary precepts and conduct in the Deity; the proposing moral precepts, as laws divinely promulgated; the making sublime spiritual truths more intelligible to the meanest, by giving them a body, and presenting them in a historical dress; and the instituting rites to signify the purity incumbent on Christians, their mutual friendship, and that no shedding of blood or penance is necessary for reconciling man to God, who frees from punishment, without any satisfaction, every sincere penitent. § 88. Still, however, more  
unshaken



unshaken confidence and serenity may be derived from the careful study of natural religion. The Messiahship of Jesus depends on the authority of the Old Testament. Now, how can we be satisfied as to that authority, when the Jews themselves were not? The Sadducees paid small regard to any of the books of the Old Testament, except those of Moses: and the Jews in general had not the ideas of immediate inspiration, which many Christians, through ignorance of Eastern idioms, have embraced. § 58, 59. Moses's religion represents Jehovah as a severe lawgiver, not as a creator and father; sentiments unfavourable to a serene conscience and a generous heart. Fear being its great engine, though it commanded, it could not produce the loving God with all the heart. The neighbours whom the Jews were required to love as themselves were only their fellow Jews. Other nations they were not only permitted, but obliged to hate. Their religion opened no prospects of a happier life. The Pharisaic resurrection was a modern fancy, that Jews would be raised from the dead to be happy in the thousand years reign of the Messiah. § 88. The Old Testament is therefore of no service for obtaining pure ideas of religion. § 39. Christianity cannot be demonstrated, without demonstrating the facts contained in the New Testament: If these are fictions, it is no more excellent than an ingenious romance, which one would wish true. Relations, whose authenticity I doubt, cannot oblige me to receive, as laws from Heaven, the morals they recommend. The fine dress in which these histories exhibit sublime truths, may delight me, as Grandison, Clarissa, or Pamela. They may

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raise

raise enthusiastic raptures, or depress with melancholy, as Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Holy War, and life of Mr Badman. Convince and satisfy me, they cannot. These narrations, true or false, are only suited for ignorant, uncultivated minds, who cannot enter into the evidence of natural religion. Wysgerige ophelderingen, 2 St. p. 82, 85. He strongly pictures the learning and study requisite for examining the historic facts in the New Testament, and the authenticity of the records themselves; and intimates, that the English, which are indeed the best defenders of them, though they may confirm the believer, are not sufficient to convince the infidel, who may suspect, that if other books were examined, the proof would turn out differently. *Ib.* p. 57. He represents the danger of embracing a doctrine, as to the sense of which, they who confess it, are so divided. System, § 91. In the New Testament, there are three opposite opinions as to the person of Christ. In the first three gospels, the discourses in the Acts to the common Jews, and in the epistles of Peter, James, and Jude, there is no trace of Christ's pre-existence or descent from heaven. He is only represented born of a virgin, and endued with miraculous powers. In the writings of John, and epistle to the Hebrews, according to their system, who united the Pythagorean or Platonic philosophy to the doctrine of the prophets, he is termed the Word, the Only Begotten, the Light, the Life, the Truth. Paul, by allegorizing, unites these systems in the epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, where the all things created by Jesus are a moral creation. *One would think it a considerable difference, whether*

whether the worship of Jesus was homage to the true God, or idolatry; and John thought, that not honouring the Son, was denying honour to the Father. Steinbart, however, tells us, § 92, that differences about the person of Christ hurt not, that only being essential to Christianity, in which all the apostles agree, viz. That Jesus was a Divine teacher. *This is, as if one should argue, A and B term Frederic, Treasurer of the Roman Empire; C and D, Elector of Brandenburg; E and F, King of Prussia: but I have a sufficient idea of his merit, when I term him a brave warrior and an elegant poet, in which all the six agree.* Considering all this, though I deny not Christianity; I think it safest to let it alone, and content myself with the religion of Nature, which contains all essential to Christianity. Possibly, indeed, as honest Steinbart was no more inspired than the writers of the New Testament, I may find after death, that he has not led me the nearest road to happiness. But my loss cannot be great or lasting. For, as he has well instructed me, § 64, God can never punish any, more than is necessary for his reformation. He cannot mistake in the choice of his means, and must always reach his end. He would appear less lovely, if one creature should be for ever miserable. I shall therefore suffer nothing hereafter, which shall not promote my virtue and happiness.—And now, Joseph, if, after reading this conversation, you still think that Christianity merits a careful examination, I should almost advise your uncle to shut you up in a madhouse. Why should I trouble myself about the religion of Jesus, when it follows, from the principles of its defenders, that Deism is preferable? Christian, Jew, Deist,  
Turk,

Turk, are names of one signification, and belong to the common class of words without meaning. He who cracks his head about religion, is too great a fool to be suffered to walk alone.—But to shew you that Christianity is at her last gasp, I will tell you a third story. You know Mr P. F. of T., One who goes to church twice every Sunday, is esteemed a good Christian, and is of so strict morals, that perhaps Solomon would have thought him righteous over much. One day when I dined at his country-seat, he very politely excused a piece of bacon, brought to the second service without his knowledge. Having told him, I was too much of a philosopher to scruple good food; he said, if all my nation were as sensible, we would soon become Christians. When the ladies left us after dinner, the conversation about religion was resumed; and I having freely expressed my contempt of all religious distinctions; My friend, said he, you are not far from the kingdom of heaven. What! replied I, is a Deist on the point of becoming a Christian? Surely, I dream, or you rave! Neither of the two, said he. Thank God, the blind ages, which esteemed reason corrupt, and the enemy of revelation, are past. The light of truth has now discovered, that the religion of Nature and of Christ are one and the same thing. The golden age hastens, when the party-names of Jew and Heathen, Turk and Christian, shall be buried in forgetfulness. Come, follow me, said he, to the Sanctuary of Truth.—Here a very picturesque description is given of a building of that name, to which, after an agreeable walk, he was conducted. On the right side of the statue of Reason, were statues of Abraham, Moses,

Moses, Jesus, and Paul: and, on the left side, Zoroaster, Confucius, Socrates, and Mahomet. At a little greater distance, were pictures, on the one side, of the principal rational defenders of Christianity, Artemon, Praxeas, Pelagius, Arius, Socinus, Bahrdt, Semler, Fuller, Eberhard, Damm, Nicolai, Steinbart, Priestley, &c; and, on the other side, pictures of celebrated Infidels, such as Lucian, Celsus, Julian, Herbert, Rousseau, Voltaire, Bolingbroke, Hume, &c \*. Having asked him,

\* Some Socinians will think themselves harshly used by being classed with Deists. The compliment was however paid them long ago by a celebrated Deist, when few of their sect merited it so well, as many of the German, and some of the English modern reformers have since done. A worthy friend has supplied me with the following extract from "Additions to Voltaire's General History," Article, England under Charles II., paragraph 1st, Octavo edition of Nugent's translation. Edinburgh, 1777, Vol. IV., p. 243, 244.

"Deism, of which the King made a pretty open profession, was the predominant religion amidst so many others. The progress of this Deism has since been prodigious in other parts of the world. The Earl of Shaftsbury, son to the Chancellor, one of the greatest supports of this religion, formally says in his Characteristics, that this great name of Deist cannot be too much respected. A number of celebrated writers have made open profession of Deism; and most of the Socinians have at length joined them. The great reproach against this numerous sect, is, That they consult only reason, without any regard to faith; an indocility which a Christian can never forgive. But the truth of the representation which we exhibit of human life, requires, that, if we condemn their error, justice should be done to their behaviour. It must be owned to be the only sect which has never disturbed society with quarrels, and which, however mistaken, has been exempt from fanaticism. It cannot, indeed, be otherwise than peaceable. Its professors are united with all mankind, in the principle common to all ages and countries, the adoration of one single God. Differing, indeed, from other men, in having neither tenets nor temples; be-  
"living



him, what these pictures being placed here meant? he replied, To signify that these great men agreed in what was important, and that what they were thus united in, could not be wrong. Then he showed me a book. The first part was a harmony of Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Paul, Zoroaster, Confucius, Socrates, and Mahomet, discovered by sentences from the lives or writings of each of them, in eight volumes. The 2d part pointed out, in two columns, an amazing union of opinion in the rational Christians and the defenders of Deism. The 3d was a confession of truths in which all these men agreed. It cannot be supposed, said my friend, that the wise and gracious Father of mankind would suffer his children to err dangerously. These, therefore, only, are important truths, in which great and wise men of all ages and religions have agreed. Read the short extract I give you, and you will see how easily a Deist may become a Christian.

“ lieving only one righteous God, tolerating all others, and freedom laying open their sentiments. They say, that this so pure religion, as ancient as the world, was for a long time the only true religion, before God himself taught the Hebrew people another. They ground themselves on its having been always professed by the literati of China. But, these Chinese literati have a public worship, whereas the European Deists have only a private or internal worship; every one adoring God by himself, yet making no scruple to be present at the public offices of religion. At least, hitherto, only a very small number of those called Unitarians, have held any religious meetings. But these, indeed, stile themselves Primitive Christians, rather than Deists.” There was, therefore, no impropriety in the Author of the Letters, introducing a proselyte, talking of Socinians, as a great master of infidelity had wrote of them; especially as the proselyte produces better authorities for his assertions than Voltaire did, or indeed could have done, for what he wrote.

tian. You may be right, said I; but I may as easily retain my old profession of Judaism. There is, replied he, this difference, that in our country Christianity gives honours and advantages which Judaism gives not. I scornfully told him, that I disdained to act from so low a motive. This was touching him on the fore toe. He was silent, our conversation became dry and cold, and soon broke off. The sentiments of Deists are well known. I shall transcribe a few passages from the modern reformers of Christianity. Steinbart *Leere dar gelukzaligheid*, 3 afd. § 55. The laws of God are not arbitrary institutions, but paternal counsels, by following which, men become more perfect and happy. § 61. Divines have invented attributes in God, opposite to goodness, and which prompt to a conduct as righteous and holy, which would be deemed harsh in an earthly parent. Thus they hinder that love to God and trust in him, which is the only foundation of happiness, by representing God as half kind and half cruel. 3 afd. § 59. Moses, according to the childish conceptions of the Jews in his days, paints God as agitated by violent affections, partial to one people, and hating all other nations. Eichhorn *Inleitung in das Alt. Test.* Theil 3. in the beginning, accounts for prophecy by penetration and ingenious conjecture, rather than inspiration. Semler on 2 Pet. i. 21. says, that Peter speaks there according to the conception of the Jews, and that the prophets may have delivered the offspring of their own brains as divine revelations. Priestley rejects all mysteries; *History of Corruptions*, P. 1. B. 1. Steinbart excludes them in his short system of Christianity;  
Leere,

Deere, &c. § 81. Bahrdt asserts them opposite to sound reason in his *Beleidenis aan zyn keizerlyk majesteit. Jerusaleem Verhandelingen*, 3 deel. 4 verhand. represents the 2d and 3d chapters of Genesis not as a history of facts, but as an old picturesque didactic song, inserted by Moses. It seems, says he, harsh to suppose that God would curse and punish Adam and Eve for a fault, of their repenting which they gave every evidence, and that too with a severity which only deliberate transgression seemed to merit. Harsher still, that God would on that account deprive them of all inclination and ability to good: and harshest of all, that this severity should extend to their whole offspring, as if they had eaten, like their first parents, the forbidden fruit. The same gentlemen expunge from Christianity the doctrines which offend Jews and Deists. And here, their ingenuity in torturing words to a sense their authors never intended, is truly admirable. Semler explains *Jo.* x. 30. I and the Father pursue one plan: and *Rom.* ix. 5. All these privileges are so great, that God over all is worthy to be praised for ever, on account of them. Bahrdt in his New Testament translates *Jo.* viii. 58. Before Abraham was thought of, the moral revolution was divinely determined, which I was to accomplish. And 1 *Jo.* v. 20. We are indebted to his Son Jesus for our fellowship with God. This God is the only true God, and the fountain of eternal happiness. And in his confession to the Emperor, Art. 5. Scripture and reason concur, that Jesus is not named God in the same sense in which the Supreme God is so named. Spalding van Predict. ampt. p. 140, 136. The person and nature of Christ, and his

his making atonement by a proper satisfaction, are doctrines, by ignorance of which, Christians would lose nothing. Steinbart attempts to show, Lehre, &c. § 55—68, that Christ has not, as the surety of sinners, satisfied the injured honour or avenging justice of God. Eberhard confutes the same doctrine in his *Nieuwe Apologie*, p. 74—137. Bahrdt asserts that it ought instantly to be banished from religious instruction. *Vorschlag zur Berichtigung Voorede*, p. 14, 16——Bahrdt in his *Confession*, Art. 7. acknowledges that he believes not eternal punishment; and infers from the second commandment, that as one is to a thousand, so is God's inclination to punish, to his inclination to reward. Eberhard in his *New Apology*, p. 325—404, largely confutes the eternity of hell torments. Nicolai in his *life of Nothanker*, 2. part, p. 6. says: Eternal punishment may trouble old women; but a bloody atonement and eternal punishment correspond not with the exalted ideas we ought to entertain of God.——That man is naturally mortal, and that there are no rewards and punishments between death and the resurrection, was maintained before Dr Priestley, by Hobbes's *Leviathan*, p. 3. c. 38. But Bahrdt in his *New Testament*, on *1 Cor. xv.* asserts, that Jesus meant nothing more in his reasonings with the Sadducees, than the continued life of man as a moral agent; and not, what is naturally impossible, and if true, of no importance, the revival of our present bodies. See also the index to said book, art. *Auferstehung*.——And now, Joseph, the writing this long letter has fully cured me of my melancholy. If there is any religion in the world, I know none better than

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that

that of Rousseau. When Jew, Heathen and Christian tremble at death, he heroically breathed his last with these words: "Eternal Being, the soul which I now give thee back, is this moment pure, as when it came from thee. Make me partaker of thy happiness."

P. 168—226. Jof. de L. to Isr. C. Amsterdam 28th October 1784. Much as I rejoice in the restoration of your health, the light and inconsiderate manner in which you view religion, deeply affects me. What may have eternal consequences should be well weighed. Can you in earnest think that the opinions of a Lavater, Steinbart, or Eberhard, insure you from that danger? Have you not as respectable authority for the eternity of future punishment in Rabbi Isaac Abuab's Candlestick, in Rash Hofchonah, &c.? If any thing, punishment without end is clearly asserted in the New Testament; and the most fraudulent of our nation act with honour, equal to that of the modern reformers, who explain away their sense, or suggest a new and unsupported reading, when the old one will not bow to their will. Suppose *Deut.* vi. 4. was urged against polytheism, and one should reply, "Though I won't determine, there is sufficient ground to doubt the genuineness of that passage, I would wish an unanswerable proof that it is not corrupted. The original reading may have been, Jehovah, or God is Jehovah, *i. e.* the performer of his promises. This would well agree with what goes before and follows. A transcriber may have added יהוה, one: for of such additions examples are not wanting." Surely you would think this was treating our sacred books with a freedom insolent and profane.



profane. Yet Eberhard, *New Apology*, p. 335. insinuates that Origen doubted the reading, *Matth.* xxv. 40. These shall go away into everlasting punishment. A learned and candid Christian assures me, that Origen, who carefully collected every MS. of scripture which he could procure, must have found none, in which the reading was different; otherwise, so keen an advocate for the end of future punishment would have appealed to it. Some would call Eberhard's insinuation dishonourable rascality. In your friend's extract from Lavater, words are omitted, which would make you more thoroughly acquainted with the honourable Swifts. Puzzled with Jesus's words as to the damned, *Mark* xi. 44. where their worm dieth not, and their fire shall not be quenched; and thinking it too unmannerly to remove the difficulty by a various reading: he prays God to teach him what to think of these words: and then compares them, without concluding any thing, with *Pf.* ciii. 9. He will not contend always, nor keep his anger for ever. And *If.* lvii. 16. I will not contend for ever, lest the spirit should fail before me. He cautions not his readers, that Jesus speaks of the future punishment of those who die impenitent; David and Isaiah, of God's conduct in this life, to those who humble themselves under his chastenings, and repent. When I see the multitude ignorant enough to applaud such writings, I remember, what one of the Princes of Orange once said, travelling through a village on a Sunday: he asked the people, Who is the man in black playing at tennis? and was answered, The man who has the care of our souls. Good people, said the Prince, is this the man who has

the care of your souls? You had then best look about you, and take a little care of them yourselves. After freedoms certain gentlemen use with the New Testament, their false accounts of the fathers need less surprise. Priestley in his history of corruptions, P. 1. p. 49. cites Lactantius, Inst. l. 4. c. 14, as saying that Christ never termed himself God, because that would be introducing that plurality of gods, which he came to destroy: but omits words, which show that Lactantius only meant that Christ did not ascribe to himself a divine nature different from that of the Father. Hence, in a passage cited by Priestley, p. 42, he distinguishes between the generation of the Son, and the creation of angels. See also Ep. div. inst. c. 42. And to the question, How the Christians pretend to worship one God, since they give that name to two, the Father and the Son? he replies, Inst. l. 2. c. 29. *Una utrique mens, unus spiritus, una substantia.* If a worshipper of Jesus as God, when he appears before his tribunal, shall find that he was only an excellent man, still he has this excuse: "Heavenly Judge! I simply held  
 " by the letter of thy words, and the words of  
 " thy apostles. There thou wast named, God  
 " manifested in the flesh; the only begotten Son of  
 " God; the brightness of the Father's glory, and  
 " the express image of his person. When doubts  
 " arose, I thought it my duty to bring every  
 " thought into subjection to thy gospel. If I  
 " have gone too far, I followed, as I thought, the  
 " pattern of a Thomas, who called thee My God;  
 " and in worshipping thee, I did what all the an-  
 " gels of God were commanded to do."—But  
 if, in that awful day, Jesus shall appear to be God  
 blessed

blessed for ever; what apology can be made, for men having questioned what was so clearly revealed of him in the sacred oracles? Shall he who cannot comprehend ten thousand phænomena in nature, reject these doctrines, because they are mysterious? Or shall he think himself secure in these unnatural interpretations of scripture, which designedly shut out the light of truth, and betray a desperate cause? Will he then dare to plead, that the Divine glory and mediatorial offices of Christ were not sufficiently revealed?—As to the alleged heroic death of Rousseau; why did he not call a number of his faithful friends and admiring disciples to witness it? All depends on one eye-witness, a sorrowful widow, whose impartiality and accuracy are far from being so incontestible, as to establish the tendency of his principles to disarm death of its terrors. You doubt Jesus's resurrection, though witnessed by 500 at once, and Moses's miracles, though seen by thousands; and you believe the dying fortitude of Rousseau on a single testimony, and that, too, of one deeply interested in his honour. If indeed the philosopher died, boasting that he gave up his soul to God, pure as he received it; Had he forgotten how much he contributed to the confusions and miseries of the once free and happy Geneva? Did he forget his ridiculing prayer, as supposing that God, for the sake of the suppliant, would change the series of events? Did he forget how he lampooned Vernes, a preacher at Coligny, on bare suspicion of his having written a piece in which Rousseau thought himself injured, and even continuing cruelly to slander him, after protestations of his innocence? Would you

know the pretended perfect man ; peruse a piece, intituled, *Recueil des Opuscules concernant les Ouvrages et les Sentimens de nos Philosophes modernes ;* Hays, 1755.—He who compares the character and conduct of this freethinker, with his alleged dying words, must view him with compassion or contempt, not with admiration \*.

P. 227—276. Isaac M. to Rabbi Josua B. L. Nimeguen, 18th July 1785.—I think it probable, that soon the religion of Jesus will be acknowledged only by a few of the poor and simple ; and that, among men of understanding and taste, the religion of Nature alone shall be retained. The attacks of Deists against all Divine revelation, have made many proselytes among the great and honourable. Their bitterness, however, against the credibility and virtue both of Moses and Jesus, shocked not a few, and hindered their success. But now, a set of men has arisen, who, professing themselves Christians, pretend to be reformers of Christianity, which

\* Rousseau's little regard for the reputation of those who had shown him the strongest marks of esteem and attachment, appears in the story he tells of M. Bovier, a worthy advocate at Grenoble ; which, if that gentleman's conduct and apology are ascribed to inattention, exhibit him in a ridiculous, if to design, in a hateful point of view. Decency required Rousseau to conceal, and the highest moral obligations should have restrained him from praising his amours with Madame de Warens. A man of feeling would have also reflected, what pain his tale must give to many related or allied to that lady. See *Reflexions sur les Confessions de Rousseau. Par M. Servan, ancien avocat general au Parlement de Grenoble.* Paris 1783.—In that book are many fine reflections on the injustice of publishing confidential letters, written in all the carelessness and familiarity of friendship, and containing particulars which the writer or the receiver of the letter would not have wished imparted to others. There is also a severe reproof,  
of

which they have transformed into mere Deism : they lay small stress on the miracles of Jesus, reject the peculiar doctrines of his religion, and receive only its moral precepts. If these men gain the field, and the name of Christianity remain, it will signify no more than the religion of Nature. You know how favourably they are received everywhere ; and to them Deism will owe her greatest triumphs. Well-meaning men, who abhor the sprightly writings of open Infidels, by splendid encomiums on the moral precepts of Jesus, will gradually be bewitched to let his doctrines perish. Priestley, in his dedication to Lindsay, boasts the rapid progress of his system ; and Bahrdt, in his confession to the Emperor, asserts, that thousands think as he does, and that, by the spread of these reformatations, Christianity shall become the universal religion. I wonder, that none of these  
 thousands

of circulating from the press scandalous anecdotes, and a just display of the baneful influence of that practice on public virtue.

[For the remainder of this Note, the Translator is indebted to a friend.]

Rousseau was not more singular as a philosopher, than as a man. His morals scarcely admit a serious defence, to those who have read what he wrote in the last stage of his life. He relates his own licentiousness with a real and deliberate satisfaction ; and describes the criminal pleasures of his early years with the profligate ardour of a youthful debauchee. Vices in which he had always lived, and every remembrance of which should have filled him with penitential shame and sorrow, he paints in such glowing colours, as if he meant to recommend them to posterity. — His philosophy is pernicious. It substitutes feeling for principle ; and celebrates the depraved affections of the heart, above all that is wise and virtuous in human conduct. His habits were at least as depraved as his philosophy. Though the dark colours in which he has been represented by his adversaries were disregarded ; his character, described by himself, was as unworthy of philosophy, as it was hostile to purity of manners, and to religion.



thousands perceive, that these doctrines are better  
 suited to root Christianity out of the world. If  
 the opinion spread, that Jesus is not God, the  
 judicious must see, that Divine honours were  
 blasphemously received by him, and paid to him  
 by his apostles: at least, by doubtful expressions,  
 they have given plausible ground for such suspi-  
 cions. John (his bosom friend), who tells us of  
 Peter calling him the Son of God, of Thomas  
 addressing him as God, and of one born blind  
 worshipping him; mentions a story, *Rev.* xxii. 9.  
 of an angel refusing the worship he offered him;  
 probably to insinuate, that Jesus was considered  
 by himself and his disciples, as more than an angel.  
 Our ancestors must have understood, better than  
 the modern reformers, what the name, Son of God,  
 signified; and, had it signified no more than Mei-  
 shah, would not have charged Jesus with blasphem-  
 y for assuming it. He who impartially reads  
 the records of Christianity, cannot venerate the  
 man, excellent as his moral precepts were, who  
 was ambitious of Divine worship.——Bahrdt, in  
 his New Testament, maintains, that the word  
 Resurrection in the New Testament, though the  
 vulgar understand it in a proper sense, means no  
 more than being raised or delivered from a state  
 of slavery and misery, to a state of activity, free-  
 dom and bliss; and that this true sense of the re-  
 surrection of Jesus, was among the secrets intrust-  
 ed to the apostles, and to brethren of the third  
 degree. If this idea is just, Christianity is a fable  
 unworthy of further credit.——Not only does this  
 system gain ground in Germany and England;  
 but even here in Holland, most of the sects, ex-  
 cept the established church, favour it. Their ser-  
 mons

mons are moral harangues, having no connexion with the gospel, which deny, or keep out of sight, the divinity and atonement of Jesus. The form of baptism is tortured into a most unnatural sense. In a sermon I heard immediately before what they call the Lord's Supper, there was not a word of commemorating the death of Jesus as an expiatory sacrifice ; but a moral essay on brotherly love, the manifesting and confirming which was exhibited as the great end of that institution. By what I can learn, most of their people grow indifferent to all religion, are content with one sermon on Sabbaths : and, though they hear nothing but morals ; pride, luxury and dissipation daily increase among them. I suspect, that the faith even of the established church may soon receive another form than it had a hundred years ago. You know, that there are certain articles of Faith, which teachers subscribe before their ordination, and agreeably to which they promise to preach ; and that no book by teachers or members of the established church, is allowed to be published, till some members of a class have examined it, and declared it agreeable to sound doctrine. But many, both clergy and laity of the established church, complain of this restriction as an iron yoke ; whisper into the ears of magistrates, that more liberty should be allowed in speaking and writing ; and cry out against those who oppose their designs, as heresy-hunters and inquisitors. If these gentlemen succeed, subscriptions are like to be abolished, or to be considered as an unmeaning form. The examiners of books often expose themselves to ridicule, by their slovenly and contradictory censures. In 1774, those of the Hague class

class approved Kleman's Order of Salvation ; and in 1776, the same class declared, that it contained opinions and expressions opposite to the received doctrine of the church. The Leyden Theological Faculty, 1729, excepted from their approbation of Ditton on the Resurrection, his notion of the soul being clothed in death with another body. Forty-four years after, the Hague visitors approved, without exception, two Essays by Jo. Euf. Voet, which expressed the same notion. Placarts were issued, 1651, 1653, 1674, 1773, against writing, printing, or disseminating books of a Socinian tendency, or in which the religion of the State is treated contemptuously. Yet books prohibited as blasphemous, 1674, *e. g.* Bibliotheca Fratrum Polanorum, Hobbes's Leviathan, Spinoza's Works, all are to be found in every considerable auction-catalogue. Nothanker's Life has been translated from the German ; Bunkle's Life, Priestley's History of Corruptions, Evanfon's Letter to the Bishop of Litchfield, &c. have been translated from the English : and though they represent the public religion as abominable idolatry, have been published in Holland, with the names of the translators and printers. The Dort ministers, who accused, in order to church censure, the printers and venders of Priestley's book, are exclaimed against as informers. Rulers, I acknowledge, have too much work, for reading every divinity piece. Yet surely gospel ministers should attend to writings which openly arraign the worship of their God, and inform the magistrates, that they may execute their own laws. For an application of this kind, their High Mightinesses, in a resolution 17th April 1630, thanked the Leyden Divinity Professors.

Professors. What our law would have required, had the God of Israel been blasphemed, is clear from *Deut.* xiii. 8. To plead that the New Testament has no such precept, is ridiculous; for there were no Christian magistrates, to whom it could have been directed. Thus, in the church of Holland, which retains most of Christianity, the repeated placarts of the State are without effect; bitter opposers are not restrained; and ministers who set themselves against them, are hated and slandered. In the principal towns in Holland, attendance on public worship, and care of the religious instruction of children, diminishes; and ignorance, contempt of the doctrines and laws of Christ, and immorality, increase: so that were not certain places of profit and honour connected with professing the established religion, it would by many be gladly renounced. Several preachers, in the pulpit, are dry and unanimated, and, out of it, discover no zeal. Others keenly contend with one another, on trifling matters, *e. g.* if all the sufferings of Jesus, or only his last sufferings, were expiatory.——Ere the year 2000, among other plans for promoting taste and good morals, churches are like to be transformed into concert-halls and playhouses: Among moral instructors, Plato, Cicero, Seneca, and Confucius, shall be held in equal authority with Christ; and sermons, if any be then preached, and books for instructing youth, shall oftener appeal to the first, than to the last.

P. 277.—337. Rabbi Josua B. L. to Isaac M. Middelburg, 11th August 1785. Though I believe there is a time, when the Lord shall be King over all the earth, I imagine that period is yet distant,

distant, and I see not how it can be hastened by the attempts of the new reformers. You forget that their efforts are as keenly directed against our sacred volumes, as against the New Testament. Bahrdt, in his *Neueste Offenbarungen*, speaks contemptibly of both. Teller, in his *Wörterboek*, article *Eingeben*, says, that the inspiration of the Old Testament mentioned *2 Tim.* iii. 16. must be explained from the same phrase *Job xxxii.* 8. where every thing excellent and ingenious is represented as coming from God. Damm, who died rector at Berlin in 1779, says, that Moses's writings were inspired, in so far as they instruct us concerning God, and lead us to God. He could know the age of the world, no better than we do. The history of the fall is a fable; and though there is much truth in Moses's history, the dress is poetic. In Joshua, the circumstances of the conquest of Canaan are fictitious. The books of Samuel contain a multitude of falsehoods. There are no prophecies in the Psalms. Daniel is full of stories, contrived or exaggerated by superstition. With the other prophets Christians have no concern.——Semler rejects, without scruple, the Song of Solomon, Ruth, Chronicles, Ezra, Esther, Nehemiah: objects considerably to Daniel: doubts as to the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings: and leaves nothing inviolate, except the writings of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets. Even in these last, he rejects particular passages as not inspired, *e. g.* the histories of the creation and of Balaam. In general he maintains, that histories important only to the Jews, laws obliging them alone, and whatever is not for the general use of mankind,



mankind, could not be inspired. Bahrdr on *Rom.* ix. 4. warns against fancying the trifles great and excellent, which Paul, to win the Jews, there talks of in so high and pompous a manner. Is not this making Moses a mountebank, and Paul a flatterer? These men have one aim with the Deists, the rooting out all revealed religion, in which, should they prevail, mankind must relapse into heathen ignorance and barbarity. Their prevailing, however, I little dread. Steinbart's reasonings against the Mosaic religion, were urged before him by Voltaire, and sufficiently answered by Abt Guenee and others. Neither Deism, nor the scheme of the modern reformers, gains much ground, except among those who, not choosing to conform their morals to stricter principles, so bend their principles, as to favour criminal indulgences and dispositions. The conduct of Bahrdr and other philanthropists at Hildesheim, and of a clergyman in Holland, who lately renounced the established church, demitted his office, and became a disciple of Steinbart, do as much dishonour to their own principles, as their pens attempt to do to those commonly received. Your hopes of the fall of Christianity from the efforts of the new reformers, would be less sanguine, did you consider the fate of similar, or even more dangerous efforts, in former ages. The persecution of Athanasius, and the cruelties committed by Genferic and Hunric against the acknowledgers of the divinity of Christ, could not extinguish that doctrine. The temporary success of Socinus and of his followers in Poland, hath not hindered the Trinitarian from remaining among Christians the general creed. It will not be easy to root out the

† H

doctrine

doctrine of the Trinity, while baptism ; or that of the atonement, while what they call the Lord's Supper, remains. Modern Unitarians are not more ingenious than their predecessors. I learn from Mosheim, that Simon Budnæus, in the 16th century, advanced the notion, which Priestley now defends, of Jesus being the son of Joseph. There is hardly an explication of a text relating to the Trinity in Damm, Bahrtdt, or Semler ; which was not formerly proposed by Enjedinus, Wolzogen and Schlictingius ; and censured by Zanchius, Calovius, Hoorbeck and Feverbornius. The wanton freedom, with which these reformers misrepresent the sentiments of the fathers, expunge texts of scripture, alter their reading, or explain away their sense, must open the eyes of many. Weak is Priestley's plea against the death of Jesus being expiatory, that, *I. lxvi. 20. Rom. xii. 1.* the name of sacrifice or offering was given, where there was no expiation. We know that this may be said of meat and thank-offerings : but of sin or trespass-offerings, where expiation was not designed, we know not. When the same Doctor observes, that Christians are termed priests as well as kings, he forgets that they are never termed high-priests. He asks, If the great day of atonement typified Jesus, why he died not on that day ? With the same spirit, if Jesus had died on that day, he would have demanded, If the paschal lamb prefigured his death, why died he not on the day on which it was slain ?——Further, these gentlemen are not united among themselves, and he who would follow them, knows not which to choose for a guide. Denying that Jesus died as an atonement, they are marvellously perplexed, what

what was the grand end of his death. Steinbart thinks, it was to free men from all fear of wrath, and to assure them, that God without satisfaction or punishment forgives the offender, who, sensible that sin unfits him for the Divine benefits, honestly endeavours to repent: Priestley, that it was to give the most perfect proof of a future resurrection, by submitting to death in hope of it: others, that it was as a pattern of that entire obedience and subjection to the Divine will, which God, in another life, shall gloriously reward. Bahrdt teaches, that the soul's surviving the body, is the capital truth of rational religion; compared with which, every other is of small importance. Priestley teaches, that the soul dies with the body, and lives not again till the resurrection.-----If the modern system triumph, it must be by arms, not by argument. I will try the reasonableness of what of it relates to the death of their Messiah. If he died not in the room of sinners, and as a sin-offering; why did one, whom all his followers represent as of spotless and exemplary virtue, die a painful, shameful and accursed death, as if he had been the meanest and vilest malefactor? If it is said, he thus died, that as a martyr he might confirm his doctrine; I ask, what doctrine? It cannot be alleged, the doctrines of natural religion, purified by him from all false representations of cunning or superstition. None of his followers ever pretended that our rulers condemned him to death, for preaching the religion of Reason. Pretend it indeed they could not, unless they also pretended it was an article of the religion of Reason, that he was the Son of God, and equal with

God. Another teaches that he died to prove the resurrection of the dead. If this was the chief and leading article of his instructions, it is strange, that the Pharisees, who zealously maintained that article, were of all the Jews his bitterest enemies. Further : If the end of his death was to confirm his doctrine, his dying in so very different a manner from that of Jewish, and even of Christian martyrs, is somewhat unaccountable. The pain and shame which our martyrs endured in the horrible persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, if they were not deadened, were more than compensated by joy in God, by the comforts of a good conscience, and the ravishing hopes of immortality. Not so he, whom his followers extol as the best of men, and the king of martyrs. From him, the writings of his disciples relate, God so far hid his face, and withdrew his consolations, that in bitter anguish he cried, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death : my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? Marvellous indeed ! that the Father of mercies should give up an innocent person to such severe sufferings, for confirming truths, which, if his history is true, were already, by his miracles, more amply confirmed. A third has discovered, that he died to remove from mankind all fear of the wrath of God, and of future arbitrary punishments. If so, his death was a strange device for that purpose. Before his death, God was regarded as the rewarder of virtue, and the punisher of vice. But the inflicting exquisite pain, on one celebrated as the most innocent and virtuous of the human race, was a method of freeing men from fear of arbitrary punishment, as incomprehensible as any of the doctrines



trines reprobated by the new reformers. An instance of arbitrary punishment, the greatest which ever the sun beheld ; the giving up virtue a prey to malice and cruelty : instead of extinguishing dread of arbitrary punishment, and impressing amiable thoughts of the Deity, seemed a temptation to conclude, that it was a vain thing to serve him. A fourth assures us, the minds of men who fancied God must be reconciled by sacrifice, were set at ease by an imaginary sacrifice, represented as expiating once for all the guilt of men. By this hypothesis, instead of enlightening men, and correcting their false conceptions, virtue must be treated as vice, and innocence as guilt, vain imaginations strengthened, and a deceived heart gratified by a new deceit. Who freezes not, when such falsehood and tyranny is ascribed to a holy God ? If an account of the death of Jesus, which so badly hangs together, were generally received among Christians, Christianity would soon be despised as a monstrous system, and banished from the face of the earth. But as for me, I see not how a system so contradictory to itself, can be generally received, unless either by fire and sword, or by the Nazarenes being bereaved of common sense. I expect not therefore an end of Christianity, by men's retaining the name of Christian, and renouncing every thing meant by it. ——— I agree with you, that the fierce contentions of some in the Church of Holland on trifling matters, and that the decay of zeal and watchfulness among others, are no symptoms of that Church's stability. I have heard too, that secret designs are forming to open the way for points of trust to all denominations of Christians, Papists,

H. 3.

perhaps :



perhaps excepted. If such a scheme succeed, the established religion must soon fall to the ground. If the pretext has any weight, that other sects pay tribute, and promote trade and manufactures, Papists and we Jews, have as good a claim to be found capable of such offices. If our opinions are dishonouring to Jesus, so are those of the modern reformers.——Think not from any thing in my letter, that I judge too favourably of the Christians, and am in danger of going over to them. No, my friend, I am convinced, on examination, that the religion of my fathers is divine; and could not renounce it without contracting guilt. But I think it encourages not the spirit of proselyte-making, much less the spirit of persecution; and I have learned from Jeremiah, to pray for the peace of the city where I dwell, instead of cursing its Christian inhabitants.

P. 338—356. *Ifr. C. to Joseph de L. Maarfen, 3d Oct. 1785.* I am no longer disposed to laugh at religion, or to plead that Christianity has no comforts in death. I witnessed the last moments of my worthy gardener, and wish I may die his death; and if there is happiness in another life, this disciple of Jesus is assuredly happy. When the physician told him he was in extreme danger, How, said he, can that be, when God is my Father, Jesus my Redeemer, Heaven my country, and Death the messenger of peace? The greatest risk I run, is to die; but to die, is to enter on complete and endless bliss. *Next follows his edifying conversation with the Infidel physician, and with a Socinian gentleman.* His last words were, "I die. But why need that trouble me? my Jesus is the true God, and eternal life." I  
could

could not but impart, what, according to your taste and ideas, must be interesting. You see I can be serious.

#### NUMBER IV.

*EDICT of the KING of PRUSSIA—Potsdam,  
9th July 1788.*

**WE**, FREDERIC WILLIAM, by the grace of God, King of Prussia, &c. Proclaim and make known to all, that long before we mounted the throne, we perceived the necessity of attention, after the example of our illustrious predecessors, and particularly of our royal grandfather now with God, for persevering in, or restoring to its original unsophisticated purity, the Christian religion of the Protestant Church, through the Prussian dominions; for restraining, so far as we can, infidelity, superstition, corruption of the great truths of the Christian faith, and the licentiousness of manners arising from these; and for hereby giving our faithful subjects a satisfying proof, how they may rely on us their Sovereign, with respect to their most important interests, entire liberty of conscience, inviolable security for the confessions received by them and their fathers, and protection against all disturbers of their worship. Having therefore provided, by various regulations, for the most important necessities of the state, we now, without further delay, in consideration of another weighty duty of rulers, intimate these invariable resolutions:

## I.

We command and ordain, that the three principal confessions of the Christian religion, the Reformed, the Lutheran, and the Roman Catholic, continue as hitherto, be preserved genuine, and be protected, according to the many edicts of our pious predecessors.

## II.

The toleration of the other sects peculiar to Prussia shall remain unimpaired, and no constraint shall be offered to the consciences of any, who behave as good citizens and subjects, keep their peculiar opinions to themselves, and do not endeavour to make profelytes, and shake the faith of those of other communions. As every man hath the care of his own soul, he must have it in his power to act freely in that matter. Princes should provide for their subjects, teachers of pure Christianity, and thus give all an opportunity of learning and receiving it. To every one's conscience it must be left, what improvement he shall, or shall not, make of that advantage.

The sects hitherto publickly tolerated in our states, are, (besides the Jews) Herrnhutters, Menonites, and the Bohemian Brethren, which hold their religious assemblies under the protection of government, and shall retain undisturbed this freedom no way hurtful to the state. But the Spiritual Department shall prevent other conventicles, hurtful to the constitution and to the state, being held under the name of worshiping assemblies, by which new teachers of all sorts may gain followers,

ers, disturb the public peace, and abuse the toleration.

### III.

We severely prohibit profelyte-making in all confessions without distinction: and clergymen, or others of different religious parties, imposing on those not of their communion, the doctrines of their sect, or their own peculiar opinions in matters of faith, or in any way seducing or persuading to receive them. Every one, however, has full permission, from his own free conviction, to renounce his old, and adopt a new confession. Only, for avoiding various inconveniences, he must publicly announce this his change of religion.

### IV.

Whereas it is reported, that disguised Popish priests, and monks, and masked Jesuits, secretly sneak up and down in Protestant countries, to convert those whom they call heretics, which we will not allow in our dominions: We therefore discharge the Popish clergy in them from such conduct, and command our Supreme Ecclesiastical Courts, our other tribunals, and all our faithful subjects of all ranks, to exert themselves for discovering such emissaries, and to report them to the Spiritual Department for further orders.

### V.

Much as we disapprove profelyte-making in all confessions, as what must have the worst effect on the common people; with pleasure we observe the clergy and laity of the Reformed, Lutheran, and Popish churches, living together in a kind and friendly

friendly manner. We exhort them carefully to cultivate this agreeable harmony. Instead of opposing those of different confessions, in lending their places of worship, or otherwise assisting one another, such indications of a tolerant spirit will give us peculiar satisfaction.

## VI.

We enjoin, that the liturgies and directories of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches be preserved. The spiritual department in these Churches may change the language of an age where German was less cultivated, and adopt expressions more in present use. They may abolish old ceremonies and usages, not essential: but, in doing this, they must avoid the change of what is essential in the old creeds and confessions. This injunction appears to us the more necessary; as,

## VII.

We have observed with regret, for some years before our accession to the crown, many of the Protestant clergy allowing themselves unbounded freedoms with the doctrines of their confessions, denying many important articles of Protestantism and of Christianity, adopting a modish tone in their manner of preaching, perfectly opposite to the spirit of true Christianity, and thus shaking the very pillars of faith. They are not ashamed to serve up again the wretched and often refuted errors of Socinians, Naturalists, Deists, and other sects, and with much boldness and impudence, to spread them among the people, under the extremely abused name of *enlightening*; to depretiate the authority of the Bible as the revealed will of  
God;



God; to corrupt, to explain away, or utterly to reject the sacred records; to represent faith in mysteries, and particularly in the Redeemer's atonement, as ill-founded or superfluous, and thus to reproach our common Christianity. We are the more desirous to stem the current of these disorders and outrages in our dominions, because we think it the first duty of a Christian ruler, to preserve in his states, and to secure from all corruption the Christian religion, of which the transcendent excellency has often been established by undoubted proofs, and to maintain it in all its dignity and original purity, as taught in the Bible, and in the judgment of those of different confessions, established in their symbolical books; that thus the common people may not be left at the mercy of speculative modish teachers; and millions of our good subjects, robbed of the tranquillity of life, deprived of comfort on a death-bed, and plunged into misery.

#### VIII.

In virtue of our right of property and legislation in our states, we prohibit all Protestant clergymen or teachers of youth, under the penalty of unavoidable deprivation of their charges, and such severer punishment as we shall judge fit, from spreading these and other such errors, in the discharge of the duties of their function, or in any other way public or private. As we must, for the prosperity of the state, and happiness of our subjects, maintain the authority of our laws, and cannot suffer judges, by ingenious sophistry, to explain away their meaning, or to alter them at pleasure; far less can we allow every clergyman to act  
in

in religious matters after his own fancy and humour, to retain or reject the great truths of Christianity received in the church, to teach the people in a way consistent or inconsistent with them, and, as he chooses, to set them in a true light, or to substitute in place of them his own conceits. There must be a common fixed rule and directory, according to which the people must be faithfully instructed in matters of faith by their teachers. That rule in our Church hath hitherto been Christianity, according to the reformed Lutheran, or Roman Catholic confessions. Under this rule the Prussian monarchy has long prospered; and, even in this political view, we are not disposed to suffer it to be changed, by the ill-timed fancies of pretended reformers. Every teacher of Christianity, therefore, in our dominions, who belongs to any of these confessions, must teach agreeably to the established doctrines contained in it; for to this he is bound by his office, his duty, and the condition under which he was placed in his particular charge. They who teach otherwise, are punishable by the laws of the land, and can, with no propriety, any longer retain their functions. We cheerfully allow the clergy in our dominions the same liberty of conscience with the rest of our subjects, and are far from offering the least violence to their inward convictions. The teacher, who is convinced that the scheme of doctrine contained in his confession is wrong, may, at his own peril, retain this conviction undisturbed; for we arrogate to ourselves no dominion over his conscience. Only, according to his own conscience, he must cease to be a teacher of his church. He must lay down an office, for which,  
from

from his change of sentiments, he feels himself useless and unqualified: for the doctrine of a church must not vary according to the present persuasion of this or the other clergyman. Yet, from our love to liberty of conscience, we at present permit clergymen, known to be more or less affected with the above-mentioned errors, to remain in their offices; provided they preserve sacred and inviolable, in teaching their churches, the plan of their respective confessions. If they preach not the doctrines of these faithfully and solidly, but preach what is opposite to them, such deliberate disobedience to our edict shall be punished with dismission from their charges, and even more severely.

## IX.

Our spiritual departments, both of the Reformed and Lutheran confession, are strictly enjoined, to keep a watchful eye on the clergy in our dominions, that every teacher in churches or schools may do his duty, and accurately observe what has been above required: And we bind it on the consciences of our ministers, and the heads of these departments, that, as faithful servants of the state, and as they would avoid our highest displeasure, they would constantly watch over the execution of this edict.

## X.

We enjoin the heads of both spiritual departments, to make it their chief care, that vacancies in parishes, in divinity chairs, and in schools, be supplied by men, whose inward conviction, of what it is their duty publicly to teach, there is no

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reason

reason to doubt; and all candidates who express opposite principles, must, according to the authority granted to both these ministers, be instantly rejected.

### XI.

As from all this it sufficiently appears, that we are deeply concerned for the preservation of the Christian religion in our states, and for promoting, so far as in our power, true godliness among the people, we beseech our loyal subjects, to study a regular and pious walk; and as we have opportunity, we will discover our value for men of religion and virtue; knowing, that the unconscientious and profligate can never be good subjects, and still less faithful servants of the state, whether in greater or lesser matters.

### XII.

Whereas the solemnizing and sanctifying Sabbaths and festivals, hath been enjoined by sundry edicts of our pious forefathers, these shall on the whole be noways repealed; though, by a special police law, we intend some further regulations, suited to the state of the present times.

### XIII.

The clerical order shall be despised and ridiculed by none. As such treatment of them has often an unavoidable influence on the contempt of religion itself, we must testify our displeasure at it, and, as we see cause, punish it. On every occasion, we will show our regard for honest and well-accomplished preachers, and instructors of youth; and in proof of this, we hereby renew the edict  
of

of our royal grandfather, now with God, for freeing their children from military services, if they apply to the sciences, to the imitative arts, or to commerce. But, that exemption shall cease, if they apply to manual arts, or any other line of life; or if, as students, they have learned nothing, and are rejected after examination. And we will order necessary information of these things to be given to the regiments.

## XIV.

Finally, we enjoin all our tribunals and magistrates, ecclesiastical and civil, in our kingdom and states, to observe this edict with the utmost strictness and attention; and the rest of the clergy, and all our faithful subjects, to regard it in their conduct.

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The translator heartily joins Dr Schneider, in the sentiments with which he introduces the copy of this edict inserted in his acts and records 1788.——Health and prosperity to the great and wise Monarch, who by a decree, as moderate as zealous, has checked the dreadful disorders, so justly characterized § 7. If it be maintained and followed out as its excellency and importance deserve, which may surely be hoped from the wisdom of the Sovereign and of his minister, this will have a happy influence in restoring or preserving pure genuine Christianity, not in the Prussian states only, but in other Protestant states. Limits will be set to the astonishing abuse of the liberty of the press, in blaspheming God, ridiculing the most precious truths of religion, lampooning princes and magistrates, and diffusing immorality: and true Christianity and Christian morals



will be promoted. This has been the wish of many thousand pious, honourable and worthy men, both among Protestants and Catholics. What they wished, they now hope will be realised, through that wise and gracious Providence, which has often so visibly and gloriously interposed in behalf of Christianity.

## N U M B E R V.

*Account of the Controversy occasioned by the King of Prussia's edict, 9th July 1788. Chiefly translated and abridged from Dr SEILER's Gemeinnützige betrachtungen, i. e. Remarks generally useful, &c. Erlangen 1789, page 99—192.*

§ 1. **T**HE edict of his Prussian Majesty, inserted No. 4. was occasioned by many clergymen, not only attacking from the press the most essential truths of the Gospel, but preaching doctrines opposite to these, in which they had solemnly engaged to instruct their people. Several small fugitive pieces, which lampooned it in bitter and indecent language, are unworthy of notice. Not long after it was published, Freymuthige betrachtungen, i. e. Free Thoughts, appeared. To these Dr Semler replied in his Vertheidigung des königlichen edicts, i. e. Defence of the Royal edict, Hall. 1788. Some of the most plausible reasonings of the anonymous Free Thoughts, with the replies of Dr Semler, Dr Seiler, and the Translator, follow.

*In what a state are we now, when we dare not open our eyes, must believe as commanded, and act without*

*without conviction?* Who requires this of the Prussian subjects? The Royal edict allows every one to believe what he will; and, if he alters his views of religion, to join another sect; and every sect is allowed to have their own confession, and to publish in defence of it.

*Can the doctrines of religion be enjoined by edicts?* No man can be enjoined, what he shall believe. These, however, employed as public teachers, may very properly be enjoined what they shall teach. The magistrate does no wrong, when he protects religious establishments, in the principles and laws on which they were united. That protection hinders neither clergy nor laity from leaving one sect, and going over to another. Only it is with reason required, that they should declare to what denomination they belong.

*You infringe my liberty of conscience, and injoin me to receive your opinions. He only can command my faith who is infallible.* Freedom of thought is not hindered by those of an establishment, or by those of a separate religious society, saying: "You cannot be admitted or remain our teacher, unless you believe that scheme of religion which we mean to have inculcated on ourselves and our children." The end of religious establishments, or of dissenting societies, is lost, if public teachers of different denominations are not bound to teach agreeably to their respective formulas. It would be madness in any body of men, who view certain doctrines as highly important, to commit the preserving or defending these doctrines to men indifferent about them, or who detest them as deadly errors.

*If the Royal edict is perpetual, and admits no change of confessions, adieu to free enquiry.* The preface to the Augsburgh Confession expressly declares that it is not unchangeable.

*Will Royal edicts indeed support a tottering creed?* It is not proven that the creed of the orthodox totters. It retains its worth, though by many that worth is not discerned. Error prevailing in a metropolis, is no proof that it prevails in a whole kingdom. Why did the author of the Free Thoughts write against an edict from which he apprehended no danger? The experience of forty years in Germany, has taught what influence the great have on men's heads as well as their hearts. If an illustrious Monarch, in other respects of unrivalled merit, has spread sceptical and infidel principles among many of his thoughtless courtiers, ill-instructed soldiers and officers, and half-learned divines; his successor commits no crime, when, without restraint on liberty of conscience, justly alarmed at tenets unhinging the principles of his subjects, and undermining the foundation of their hopes, he exerts his influence for promoting a better cause.

*The magistrate must doubt the truth of his own religion, who forbids contradicting it.* The magistrate has not infringed the liberty of the press, or forbidden attacks from it on the established religion. His zeal for truth, is a sorry proof that he suspects it error.

*In many places, even in the country, what is termed heterodoxy prevails: and he who preaches against it, is laughed at.* The Apostles were thus treated; and if those who continue in their doctrine, meet with no better usage from many of their hearers, they need not be surpris'd. While, however,

ever, some account the plain truths of the Gospel foolishness; to others they will prove the wisdom and the power of God. In the mean time, they who deviate from the truth, have no right to prescribe to societies adhering to it, by whom they shall be instructed.

*From regard to truth, seven opposite systems are established by the edict. What if I should prefer Socinianism to them all? You are free to worship God as you will, and the edict hinders not such preference. There are in Prussia some small Socinian churches, whose toleration the pious Jablonski promoted. Men therefore of that persuasion might enjoy their sentiments undisturbed, if they bewrayed not designs to introduce a revolution in the public establishment.*

*If the atonement is proven, what occasion for this edict? That it may be preached where it ought to be, as God hath commanded. The religion of Christ hath been proven. Is there therefore no occasion for a legal establishment?*

*If the nation should become Socinian, must they still retain the Augsburgh confession, or the articles of the synod of Dort? Laws are good, which suit the present circumstances of a state, though they would not suit different or opposite circumstances. The possibility that a state may find new laws necessary on certain changes taking place, is no reason for her making them sooner, or for not guarding against changes, which she thinks hurtful. A church is bound in conscience to preserve to the utmost of her power purity of doctrine, and is entitled to guard against the man, who, though an enemy to what she accounts important truths, would intrude himself as her teacher. It is no  
tyranny*

tyranny in a prince to protect her in the exercise of this right, and to guard her against such intrusion. Peradventure, fifty or a hundred years hence, different ideas may be generally entertained, as to what is true or false, right or wrong, fit or improper. Meantime churches and magistrates must be guided by their own ideas, not by those of their grandchildren.

*A king should take care that the heterodox as well as the orthodox have nourishment for their souls.* A state or a sovereign is not obliged to provide spiritual poison for those who, mistaking its nature, desire it as food; though, to avoid encroaching on the rights of private judgment, they may be permitted to provide it for themselves. In Germany, they need not, in quest of it, sail to distant climes. From every bookseller's shop, they may find daily and abundant supply.

*A change of creed must be allowed.* Few now believe the atonement. Few, perhaps of the author's friends. The success, however, of certain teachers is not so extensive as they imagine. Among Papists, Calvinists and Lutherans, perhaps a thousand believe it, for ten who do not. Even in Brandenburg, Socinians and Deists are not as one to a hundred.

§ 2. The author of Freymuthige, &c. published a second part, in the form of a Letter to a Lover of Truth at Bæroe, which Dr Seiler next reviews.

*Princes stop the further discovery of truth, by joining silence on those who propose their doubts with temper and moderation.* The royal edict enjoins not this: though it forbids teaching scepticism and error to children in public schools, and to the common people in the established churches. Men  
who



who can find no edification in these, may seek it, if they will, in a number of moral tracts, where there is no tincture of the gospel.

*Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and men must not be constrained, by penal laws, to renounce error, and to submit to the religion of Jesus.* True; yet they who undertook to teach the religion of Jesus, and notwithstanding teach what is opposite to it, may justly be deprived of a trust to which they have been unfaithful.

*Jesus, his apostles, and Luther, did what the new reformers do, and what the orthodox blame. They disturbed the peace which men enjoyed in their old religion.* The resemblance is ill-founded. Jesus, his Apostles, and Luther, taught that path to true peace, from which our modern pretended reformers would lead men aside.

§ 3. Schreiben eines Candidati Ministerii an D. Semler, nebst dessen freymuthigen antwort. Hall. 1788. i. e. Letter from a Candidate for the Ministry to Dr S. With his Answer.

The reasoning of the Candidate are less plausible than those of the Freethoughts. But some of Dr Semler and Dr Seiler's remarks occasioned by them, further show the propriety of the edict.

A Christian society is not unjust, which refuses to admit, or dismisses those, who, in contradiction to the end of her institution, teach Socinian or Deistical principles. The case is different, if a teacher, who begins to doubt of articles in a public confession, thinks these articles of so small importance, that he keeps his doubts to himself. If a Protestant church may hinder Magic or Popery, she may also hinder Socinianism or Deism from being preached in her pulpits: and the civil mag-

istrate

gistrate may lawfully protect her in the exercise of that power. Light and knowledge are not excluded; and the subject is not oppressed, being allowed to judge for himself which religion is best, and to choose and profess accordingly. The times, however, were more peaceable and virtuous, before they were so much what some men call enlightened. It was not necessary that Jesus should prescribe formulas; for his disciples were united in receiving his words, and interpreting them according to their plain meaning. Churches now find it necessary to employ them, as scriptures which relate to the most important truths are differently interpreted. They who understand not Scripture in the Socinian sense, have a right to join in a society for being instructed in what they account pure Christianity, and for transmitting it to their offspring; and in order to this, they have a right by proper formulas to exclude Socinian teachers.

§ 4. *Über aufklärung, Erstes Fragment.* Berf. 1788. *i. e.* *On Enlightening. First Fragment.*

From the many editions of this tract, some have argued, that the public disapprove the royal edict. It is not surprising that so bold and animated an author has found many readers. The rapid sale may however in part have arisen, from many of the half learned, misled by ill-applied philosophy and false criticism, approving the Socinian or Deistical reformers. If so, that circumstance shows the necessity of the edict.

The author with ability and eloquence hath proved, what is allowed on all sides, and needs no proof, *Examining opinions by the principles of sound reason, and setting truth in a clear light, is necessary*

*ritorious : Excluding religion from that advantage, is criminal ; and they who, in fighting against error, oppose the further discovery of truth, cannot be vindicated.* Yet not seldom, these set up for reformers of the public, who, betrayed by prejudice, follow a false light, and lead others to darknefs. The King forbids none to examine their opinions, and thoroughly to study philosophy and the learned languages. All this may be, though the common people are not amused with uncertain conjectures, and taught a spirit of scepticism and debate, in discourses from the pulpit, and in the catechetical instruction of youth. This very fragment, published in the press of the Royal Prussian Academy, is a proof, that free enquiry is not restrained

*Knowledge of truth perfects the understanding, and cannot hurt.* Yet the same degree of knowledge is not necessary for all : the philosophy of a Newton, or the taste of a Ramler, is not requisite for training up a good ploughman or day-labourer. There are high improvements in knowledge, necessary for Ministers of State, or Teachers of Religion, which when men in the lower lines of life vainly attempt to reach, they must forget the duties of their station, or perform them with less cheerfulness. The author has proved, that enlightening the people, is better than deceiving them ; and has exposed the detestable doctrine, that lies are, in some cases, more profitable than truth.

In a second fragment, the anonymous writer talks in a higher tone, discovers his infidelity, and attempts to seduce his readers by declamation instead of argument. A few specimens may entertain, if they do not instruct.

What

What would be the consequences to religion, if this enlightened century should be driven back to darkness, and, by the iron chains of despotism, be fettered to symbolical books? Jesus founded his instructions on no such books, but on the Divine revelation of the book of Nature and Reason. The vanity of teachers who lived a century later, tempted them to forsake the traces of Nature, and to introduce a medley of Judaism, Heathenism, and Christianity. Hence arose purgatory, hell, and the dominion of priests over princes.—If the symbolical books were useful, in the age in which they were composed, the tone of the times is changed, and there is now no more need of them. Without their aid, the State can stand. It was not symbolical books that changed the face of Europe, when, the wonder of this and future ages, the enemy of creeds, and of the defenders of creeds, the never to be equalled Frederic reigned. It was not symbolical books that animated his soldiers, gained the battles of Leuthen and Rosbach, decided in the cabinet war or peace, enlivened trade and manufactures, and composed and enacted so wise a system of laws.—What would have happened, if Frederic had sworn to that wretched Shibboleth, directed his government by its precepts, and consulted a Protestant Cardinal, what they prescribed? What would we have gained, had our politics sunk down to the politics of the ages when these books were manufactured? Books so silly, and yet so pernicious, that a glance at their contents might give eyes to the blind! Is not the lie taught in these books, that he who believes not on Jesus, must be damned eternally? The consequence of these doctrines, which Satan invented, and Beelzebub, by priests and monks, hath spread  
through

through the world, is pride in our own faith, and contempt of that useful part of the nation, the Jews, who believe not in Jesus. For, why should I value a dog accursed of God, and destined to wallow for ever in fire and brimstone?—By reviving the old spirit of confessional orthodoxy, talents and genius will be extinguished ; trade and manufactures, as promoting luxury, discouraged ; old women burnt for witches ; philosophy and astronomy silenced, lest they should dispute the sun's standing over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Ajalon. Signs will be perceived in the sun, moon and stars, where we now see the ordinary laws of Nature. Ghosts and apparitions will often alarm. A monstrous birth will presage the ruin of states ; a comet, war and bloodshed ; the Aurora Borealis, Heaven's vengeance ; and the screeching of an owl, the approach of death. A bad taste will debase histories, poems, pictures, statues, buildings. Priests, fiercely zealous for confessions, will lord it over the people. Princes will forbid freedom of thought and improvement in knowledge, and say to the wise and honest, be fools or hypocrites. — If those of every confession must retain their old doctrines, the Jew, though wiser than his ancestors, like them, must curse Jesus, and the followers of Jesus. The Lutheran must preach against predestination, and maintain from the pulpit, his *with, in, and under the bread and wine*, against both Papists and the Reformed. The Reformed must be taught, that, without works, men may be as happy as the most virtuous, because they were ordained to happiness. The Catholic Priest must confine salvation to his own Church, and damn all who will not become members of it.



In this profusion of sprightly language, there is a wretched penury of argument. To the attentive, other parts of this review sufficiently obviate what is plausible. Great as Frederic was, he was no more than man; and a bombast encomium will not prove it impossible, that, by other men, he may be equalled or excelled. He believed less than other princes: and surely, in that particular, they may copy a better pattern. Though himself attached to no confession, he allowed the orthodox to retain their old hymn-books, confessions, and catechisms, and protected them in that right. It is a trifling remark, that the safety of the state depends not on every subject receiving one uniform rule of faith. This lesson was unnecessary for statesmen in Prussia, where so many sects of opposite confessions are allowed. But it is an important question, which our author condescends not to touch, if confessions may not prevent disorders in particular sects, and secure the laity from the tyranny of their teachers, in obliging them to hear what they deem heretical. Symbolical books are not abominable or useless, though they perform not, what they never meant to perform. They were not composed, to teach the military art, to inspire soldiers with courage, to train up apprentices for trade or manufactures; to direct princes in enacting laws, and administering government; to fix the rights of princes and subjects; or to decide the disputes between one nation and another. Pious princes and statesmen, who valued them as means of preserving purity of doctrine, never dreamed of consulting them on military manœuvres, or on political, commercial, or law questions. But, they knew, that they hinder-  
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ed not the conduct of the general, the bravery of the soldier, the industry and skill of the mechanic and manufacturer, and the wisdom of the politician. It is a strange idea, that what is not good for every thing, is good for nothing. The great Gustavus Adolphus and his soldiers, were neither Socinians nor Deists. They fought and conquered, long before the General German Bibliothec had begun to diffuse Christian Deism. The men who gained the battles of Leuthen and Rossbach were not acquainted with the refined principles of that Journal. Most of them were zealously attached to the doctrines of their respective confessions: and, among a thousand Christians, there was hardly one tinctured with our author's principles. But because the General German Bibliothec changed not the face of Europe, and gained not the victories of a Gustavus or Frederick, will our author pronounce that work useless? Or, would he think it a good argument against Socinian or Deistical principles, that they cannot claim the honour of the important and meritorious achievements in which, he tells us, the symbolical books had no share? Were the men, to whom Prussia was chiefly indebted for her manufactures, Deists? Or, were they not French refugees of the Reformed Church? Did Deism compose and enact the wise system of laws which, as our author observes, immortalize the name of Cormer? Why then did Cormer subscribe the royal edict? The author must be well acquainted in hell, and thoroughly informed of the political and ecclesiastical schemes carrying on there, who, with so minute exactness, distinguishes Satan and Beelzebub, and ascribes to the

first the invention, and to the second the spreading through the world the doctrines of the orthodox. But, we must excuse him, in ascribing to hell the origin of opinions in his view so detestable; in charging them with palpable absurdity, and in urging against them objections which have been a thousand times answered\*. Bold assertions, however poorly supported, were the best reasons his cause could admit. There are many simple enough to believe every word in his pompous harangue, and who are led by sound, not by sense. By representing Jesus as a Deist, the author, if he means it as a compliment, declares what he himself is. Our symbolical books say not, that all who want the means of faith, and believe not in Christ, shall perish. But they say, what Jesus said before them, that he, to whom the gospel is preached with its proper evidence, and who yet rejects it, shall be damned. A friend of toleration, who recommends and practises universal benevolence, by benevolence will be instigated to warn against errors which to him appear thus dangerous. The magistrate may allow different sects to retain their respective principles, and even their ideas of their necessity for salvation; and yet he may require, and they may practise, mutual toleration.——The Old Testament is the only creed of the Jew, and he is at liberty to become either Christian or Deist. The Lutheran is not obliged to affix the same idea which Luther did to the words, *in, with, and under the bread and wine*, and hath better business in the pulpit, than

\* For hints of many of these remarks on the second fragment, the translator is indebted to the book mentioned § 9.

than confuting the tenets of other churches, and especially tenets which the greatest part of them now renounce. While the Reformed teach, that we are justified through the merits of the Redeemer, they also teach, that without holiness, no man shall see the Lord, and that good works are necessary to justify our profession of faith and holiness. Whatever is orthodox Popery, many Roman Catholics preach universal benevolence, and are enemies to persecution.

§ 5. *Über wahrheit et irrthum. Ein nothwendiger nachtrag zur schrift über aufklärung.* Hamburg 1788. *i. e.* On truth and error. A necessary supplement to the Essay on Enlightening.

In this performance, though there are some things inaccurate and unguarded, the following extracts will shew, that many of the reasonings are solid and unanswerable.

Were all clergymen enlightened philosophers; and well-instructed divines, men who, free from prejudice, could with a glance infallibly distinguish between reality and appearance; rulers might safely permit them to turn the hearts of their subjects which way soever they would, as they could not possibly turn them wrong. But, if such infallible guides cannot be found; and if, notwithstanding, the welfare of the state depends on social virtues, and these again on religious principles: it cannot be indifferent to a Prince: what religion his subjects are taught. The populace must have spiritual guides, and the safety of the state will be variously affected, as these guides conduct them to fanaticism, to infidelity, or to genuine Christianity. It is better the peo-



ple should be preserved in virtue, by retaining their present principles and a little deceit, than that they should, by enlightening them, be betrayed to irreligion and vice. If leading the people by their imaginations and feelings is deceit, such deceit in some cases is lawful. \* “ This is ill and dangerously expressed. The common people, indeed, ought not to be unhinged, perplexed, and distressed, by every fancied genius bringing his dreams to the pulpit. Diverge not the vulgar of their present motives to virtue till you have furnished them with others better and more effectual. Many things Jesus told not his disciples till the near approach of his sufferings; and in many they were not instructed till the descent of the Spirit after his ascension. Yet truth must be taught as soon as men can bear it, and in the mean time men must not be deceived by doctrines contrary to truth; though, to strike them the more, truth may be sometimes clothed in sensible images, as the scripture compares hell to a lake burning with fire and brimstone.” A state must undoubtedly gain by so enlightened a sovereign as the great Frederic. A toleration of all religions was his maxim. Yet he permitted not the clergy to teach what they pleased. He sought not to enlighten his people by force. He protected those in their choice who preferred the old hymn-book to the new reformed one. “ He thought it his duty to secure the teaching evangelical principles in schools. He removed from his office Damm the Socinian rector; and often urged teaching people

\* What is thus inclosed “ ” contains Dr Seiler’s remarks.



ple the catechism." The ignorance of many both in towns and in the country gives advantage to Deists for spreading their sentiments. Zimmerman, in his account of Frederic the Great, publicly maintains, that Deism has been preached in some village-pulpits. Every day books full of dangerous errors appear; and their agreeable style often bewitches the roving fancies of young raw clergymen to drink in the infection. Their communicating infection to others cannot be prevented, if they may preach what they please. The essay on enlightening is inconsistent, in extolling the merits of Luther, and yet in ascribing his favourite doctrines to the invention of the devil. The queries of the writer on enlightening, if we have to thank the symbolic books for the blessings of Frederic's reign, prove nothing. These books contain nothing adverse to courage and discipline in armies, to trade and manufactures, or to wise legislation. Gustavus Adolphus, the greatest prince who ever reigned in Sweden, great in the cabinet, in the field, and in the sciences, was zealously attached to the symbolical books. Preachers are bound to the essential doctrines contained in these books, but not to approve every expression. The most zealous condemn not censuring particular passages, if it is done with decency. "Walch in Jena, and his son in Gottingen, orthodox as they were, have pointed out in them many mistakes." You ask, Shall old confessions for ever remain unaltered? Yes, till the wisest and worthiest men in a state think a change necessary, and can supply their place with new ones less exceptionable.

“Such

“Such men the new reformers deem themselves. With what justice, is the great question.”

§ 6. Wohlgemeinte erinnerungen van D. W. A. Teller. Berlin, 1788. *i.e.* Well-meant Advices, by Dr Teller.

This tract is written in language, soft, mild, and respectful to royalty; and contains many good advices to authors, reviewers, readers, preachers, hearers, and candidates for the pastoral office. It were to be wished that some of them had been better limited and explained, and others added equally necessary. He condemns some things in the writers against the Royal edict. But he falsely supposes, that the Augsburg Confession only designed to distinguish Protestants and Papists: and that the atonement and merits of Christ, are there only opposed to the fastings and penances of Roman Catholics.

§ 7. Some General Remarks by Dr Seiler, thus sum up the argument.

(1.) Churches of every confession have a right to teachers of their own faith, and ought, by procuring them, to preserve truth among themselves, and transmit it to posterity.—In the exercise of this right, Princes should protect them. (2.) Students are in no small danger of being seduced to the sceptical, infidel and heretical principles which so much prevail. Churches therefore fitly require subscription to confessions of faith, for learning whom they may safely employ as teachers. (3.) The Augsburg Confession is scriptural in what respects the foundations of faith, though wrong in some points of philosophy and history,  
and

and in some interpretations of particular texts. (4.) No man can bind the conscience of another. No church in one age can prescribe what posterity in all future ages shall believe. Protestant churches have therefore a right to alter their Confessions; and the preface to the Augsburg Confession asserts that right. (5.) No alteration of the Augsburg Confession is necessary, for it contains sound doctrine; and attempts to change it, even in things not essential, would probably at present occasion disagreeable disputes and new schisms in the church, and disquiet many sincere Christians. Trade, manufactures, and the art of war, require no such change. Frederic's first victories were gained by men warmly attached to the Augsburg Confession. Scepticism and infidelity weaken the courage of common soldiers, who have no philosophy to animate them. The Augsburg Confession is no obstacle to this age becoming still further enlightened. In Protestant Universities well affected to it, philosophy and the knowledge of the learned languages have made the most rapid and remarkable progress. Our symbolical books hinder not new interpretations of particular texts of Scripture, or illustrations of the great articles of faith and practice, in a manner less scholastic and more convincing. (6.) The Augsburg Confession restrains not free enquiry, or publishing the new opinions formed as the result of such enquiry, if they are published with decency. (7.) The Augsburg Confession pronounces a sentence of damnation on none on whom Christ hath not pronounced it. *Jo. iii. 17. Mark xvi. 16.* (8.) Men should be permitted to publish what they will: But printers and authors should be punished, who  
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publish atheism, blasphemy, treason, or what evidently subverts the welfare of a state. (9.) Future divines must endeavour, by acquaintance with history, philosophy, and the languages, and especially by a careful study of the sacred oracles, and by acquiring habits of accuracy in thinking, and perspicuity, elegance, and animation in composing, to be thoroughly qualified for defending truth against its adversaries, and representing it in the least exceptionable and most convincing light. Providence often permits for a season error to gain ground : that important truths, purged from human addition, and supported by new and better arguments, may in the issue prevail, and obtain a firmer establishment.

§ 8. It was to be expected, that Deists and Socinians should exclaim against an edict which checks the spread of their doctrines in schools, and from pulpits : Others, however, must regard fair and flattering sounds and artful misrepresentation, more than solid reasoning and the true sense of the edict, who join in such censures. The edict doth not prescribe to Christians what they shall believe, denies not the power of Protestant churches to alter their Confessions, and allows dissenters from the majority of a religious society to choose a teacher agreeable to their sentiments. It indeed enjoins teachers to preach that faith, in which, according to the design of their appointment, churches expect to be instructed. It forbids them to alter established confessions at their will, or to force on a church, doctrines which she detests. Doth a prince encroach on the rights of private judgment, by restraining the clergy from  
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such encroachments? and in preventing their tyranny, is he tyrannical?

§ 9. An anonymous apology for the edict appeared at Francfort on the Main, 1788, of which, so far as I remember, Dr Seiler has taken no particular notice. A few extracts from it shall conclude this article.

*Is it a question with those of the most moderate understanding, whether endeavours to enlighten mankind are good or pernicious?* No. But men of understanding will enquire, if what is recommended as enlightening and improvement, indeed merits the name? Was the ape in the fable wise and kind, who, for dispelling the darkness of the night, set on fire a valuable forest?

*There are men, who from prejudice and interest, blind the eyes, that truth may not be discerned, and turn to their advantage the sottishness of others.* Yes, and there are men, who from pride, prejudice or interest, represent the clearest sighted as blind, and boast as if they alone saw clearly.

*Other arts and sciences admit improvement. Why then should religion be deprived of that advantage?* If you mean by religion, men's actual knowledge of its principles and duties: undoubtedly it may be improved; and undoubtedly it may be diminished and corrupted. But, if religion means, what God hath thought fit to reveal as true or false, good or evil, necessary or destructive; he only can deem it capable of improvement, who imagines that man may be wiser than his Maker.

Though an usual, it is a mean artifice in advocates for a bad cause, to pass over facts and reasonings, to which they cannot reply; and to  
blind



blind or weary out the judge, with a pompous proof of what was not disputed. The enemies of the edict follow this plan. They prove that it is the advantage of mankind to be enlightened. That the doctrines of the new reformers enlighten mankind, they attempt not to prove. When we employ a barber for polling our hair, we don't thank him for cutting off our ears. — The advocates for the new pretended reformation go further than the Socinians. Socinians teach that Christianity contains nothing which reason cannot comprehend: and only publishes those truths of natural religion, which, though Reason could, in fact she had not discovered; which therefore it became God to reveal in the sacred oracles; and which, as interpreted by Reason, are the only rule of faith. They think not that Jesus acquired the knowledge of the will of God for man's salvation, by the strength of his understanding, or by his studying the book of Nature: but that he was translated to heaven, and there taught by God, what he afterwards revealed to man, and confirmed by miracles. The Christian Deists say, that though Jesus had some Jewish prejudices, he taught religion better than any man hitherto had done. Yet they consider him not as an extraordinary messenger sent from God; for that would oblige them to receive all he published as undoubted truth. The miracles alleged in proof of his divine commission, they declare impossible, or at least unsuitable to the wisdom of God. They tell us, the Old Testament was written in the infancy of mankind, when they believed what they dreamed or imagined, and ascribed to the miraculous interposition of Heaven, whatever they could not account

account for. The apostles, educated in these superstitious ideas, derived these works of Jesus from the finger of God, which only indicated his extensive knowledge of the powers of nature, and especially of the healing art. What cannot be explained on these principles, they suppose that the apostles added, for gaining credit to their master's doctrine, among people fond of the marvellous. Nay, from the same pious motive, Jesus appealed to these works as miraculous, which he knew were produced by natural causes. Prophecies were only sagacious conjectures, founded on the natural or moral state of the world: or devout wishes, some of which by chance were accomplished. The Jews fancied a Messiah foretold in the Old Testament; and Jesus, for making them more favourable to his person and doctrine, from a prudent condescension, disputed with them on their own principles. The apostles also accommodated themselves to the prejudices of the Jews, and used expressions common among them, which, in their strict and literal sense, would convey the absurd doctrines of the Trinity, Atonement, &c. They boast that this is the only way of vindicating Christianity, which can procure it honour and regard from men of judgment who think for themselves: and that they only give up untenible outworks, that they may the better defend the fortrefs. But, they reckon among these outworks, all the characteristical doctrines which distinguish the gospel from mere natural religion.—It is unjustly, that these gentlemen represent the name of Christian Deists, given to distinguish their sect from others, as contradictory. The babe must have a name. There

is no acknowledged author of the sect, from whom it can be denominated, as the Lutherans from Luther. Probably the many builders of this system, most of them anonymous, some of them unknown, would not yield this honour to any one of their number. It therefore remains to give them a name not dishonourable, and which distinguishes them on the one hand from every other denomination of Christians, and on the other hand from the grosser Deists, who reject Jesus as an enthusiast, or an impostor. To this sect the edict evidently refers ; and this is the pretended enlightening and improvement of which it speaks.

Those who dislike the edict for the countenance it gives to confessions of faith, should remember that they may be useful for two different purposes. The state sometimes requires them, when a new sect arises, that she may judge, if, consistently with the public safety, it can be tolerated. For societies have been formed, whose sentiments are dangerous to the state, for which I need only appeal to the now publicly known system of the *Illuminati*. To justify Protestants from such accusations, was one design of the Augsburg Confession 1530. Protestant princes, though bound not to permit in the churches of their communion, the teaching of doctrines inconsistent with that confession, are at liberty to add to it new articles.

Another design of confessions, is to prevent disorder in each particular religious society, and to secure laymen against the attempts of teachers, to encroach on their liberty of conscience. No society can subsist without established rules, in what manner and order their affairs shall be conducted.

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Religious societies cannot with reason be excepted from this rule. They must be taught, and the teacher must be directed, what he shall teach, and in what manner, though a short and general directory may sometimes be sufficient. Christians who profess to found their faith on the sacred oracles, yet, in their sentiments, what these teach, widely differ. Were teachers therefore allowed to explain scripture in any way they choose, disorder would be unavoidable. By a change of sentiment, the teacher may be led to preach to-day, the very reverse of that which two years ago he warmly inculcated. Protestant preachers have become first Arians, next Socinians, and at last Deists. Nay, we have an example at no great distance, of a Protestant preacher, who, in his public writings, has taught atheism. What must the populace, what must men of rank and ability, who have not made divinity their chief study, do, when they hear from the pulpit such opposite doctrines? A preacher dies. What he recommended as an essential and important doctrine, his successor declaims against as absurd, or at least as an unnecessary and superfluous speculation. In a church where are two preachers, one reprobates to-day what the other had yesterday zealously recommended. A schoolmaster teaches, a minister opposes the old doctrine; and even children observe the opposite tendency of their instructions. In all protestant churches, the youth are instructed by catechisms. A preacher free from restraint, argues against the doctrine contained in them; and thus the minds of the people are distracted and perplexed.—And now, what must be the consequence of all this? Some adhere to the old

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doctrines.

doctrines of their catechism; others prefer the newfangled creed of a modish preacher. Some despising, or offended with their preacher, desert his ministrations. Many want inclination or ability to examine, which of the contrary instructions given them are preferable, become indifferent about religion, and fall into scepticism or infidelity, which soon produces depravity of manners. Say not, that the teaching of natural religion and morality will prevent this. There is no security that these will be purely taught. The author of *morals for all men*, who is also a preacher, represents man as a machine, and pleads, that the immortality of the soul is false, or uncertain. Besides, doctrines and morals are so interwoven in public instruction, that, when people are taught to doubt of the first, corrupt inclinations will soon produce doubts of the second. When veneration for one half of the Christian system is lost, veneration for the other half will soon expire. Human laws will prove too weak a bridle for headstrong vicious appetite. Their execution, deceit and artifice will often elude, or violence resist. How lamentable, that there are societies, where men are taught to depreciate the motives to virtue from religion, as superfluous and insufficient! When the vulgar no longer regard the maxims of natural religion and of morality, as the revelations and laws of God; it is a bold and hardy attempt, to reason them into principles, about which philosophers by profession are not agreed. Formulas, therefore, are not unnecessary, if they prevent in a considerable degree, first, the internal divisions, and then the general decay of religion in a particular sect of Christians. But, they have  
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another happy effect. They secure to the laity liberty of conscience. If ministers may preach what they please, the edification of the people is left to the mercy of every wild fanatic, or of a flighty youth, who has heard something strange at an University, or has read some new notion in the immortal works of Bahrddt, or in the general German Bibliothec. Liberty of conscience is the natural right of communities, as well as of individuals. But the laity must bid adieu to this right, if teachers are allowed to force instructions upon them, which they view as false and pernicious; or to expose as absurd and ridiculous, what they regard as certainly true, and highly important. In this way, only the teacher has liberty of conscience, not the church. If men are entitled to join the religious sect which they prefer, they are entitled to demand, that he who undertakes to minister among them, shall preach the doctrines of that sect, or at least nothing opposite to them. He who accepts that office, tacitly enters into such an engagement. Without this, their peace in this life, and their happiness in the next, are left to the discretion, not of a Pope, who may be a man of age and experience; not of a general council, where many of the judges are wise and honest; but perhaps of a half-taught, though proud and presumptuous youth, who passes over in silence, or opposes, the important foundations of their faith and hope, and retails to them the cold imperfect morals of philosophy. To force on a Jewish synagogue a Christian preacher, would be tyranny and oppression; and yet, by the liberal ideas of those who condemn the edict, the rights of conscience require, that Christians shall want the be-

nefit of churches in an establishment, or be constrained to hear Socinian or Deistical sermons.— But, you object not so much to confessions in general, as to the gross errors of our Protestant confessions. We hinder not your thus objecting, and teaching in your religious assemblies an opposite system. Only, we claim the same freedom of condemning your theological tenets, and of preventing them from being taught in our churches. We tolerate Jews, and force not ourselves into their synagogues to teach baptism: Neither do they intrude into our churches to persuade us to be circumcised. The edict deprives no man of his liberty of leaving one sect of Christians and joining another; or of becoming a Deist or Jew, if he chooses it rather. If the King speaks of Socinian or Deistical errors, surely he has as good a title to do this, as writers against the edict have to pronounce the old Protestant doctrines nonsense. The King has not used such illiberal and indelicate expressions. The edict candidly supposes, that Socinians, Deists and Jews, may be good members of society, and entitled to its protection. Indeed, it doth not expressly tolerate societies of Deists. But as yet there are no such societies; and it is time enough to grant them toleration, when they are formed, and ask it. In Prussian Lithuania, and East Friesland, Socinian churches were tolerated. Probably the numbers of that denomination have so decreased, that there are now no congregations of them asking toleration, and therefore no occasion for mentioning them in the edict.

Depriving Socinians of their power of teaching in an established church, when they act contrary  
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to the engagements they come under at accepting their office, is no more unjust, than depriving one of a civil or military office, who does the reverse of that which he is commanded, and which he had solemnly or tacitly promised to do. Such have no right to a salary, granted under conditions, which they will no longer perform.

But must he starve, who is forced to lay down his office? No. A church, which thinks him unfit for teaching the way of life, does well in esteeming his integrity, and in contributing for the supply of his wants. Yet, it ought not to be expected, that the salary necessary for procuring another teacher, should be given to one who doth nothing for it. When one is dismissed from a civil or military office, those are not required to support him who were once under his care. It is not meet to take the childrens bread, and cast it to dogs; though dogs are allowed the crumbs that fall from the table. The dismissed clergyman may be well qualified for a civil office, or for some branch of trade or manufacture; or he may find a society of his own sentiments, by ministering to whom, he may support himself and family. But, if incapable of providing for his own and their maintenance, in any way of honest industry, like other poor, he should be supported by the state; and the more liberally, on account of his former station, and his renouncing the gains which accompanied it, from a principle of conscience.

## NUMBER VI.

*Extracts from the Present State of the Church of Ireland, 2d edit. By RICHARD Lord Bishop of Cloyne. Dublin, 1787.*

P. 13,—17. **T**HE subject is extremely delicate; but the moment is critical: it is decisive of the Protestant interest.——Truths, which in happier seasons should rest in oblivion for the preservation of general harmony, must now be brought forward to public notice, and impressed, as forcibly as possible, on the minds of Irish and British Protestants of every denomination. The delicacy which stifles them must be false, because it would be fatal.

The outrages of the White-Boys in the South, supposed to be confined to tithes, (which alone would be a matter of no little moment to the Protestant religion, as shall hereafter be proved), do by no means stop there. They extend to the persons of the established clergy, who are hunted from their parishes\*. They control the proceedings of Vestries, for granting money for the repair of churches, and other things essential to the de-

\* In the diocese of Cloyne, seven rectors of parishes, hitherto constantly resident, have applied to the ordinary, for leave to absent themselves, from well-grounded apprehensions of personal danger; three of whom are so reduced in their incomes, from a competency of two or three hundred pounds a year, that they do not receive a curate's salary, and of course Divine Service is discontinued. It is obvious, that by a similar proceeding, the White-Boys have it in their power to suppress entirely the Protestant religion in Munster, Connaught, and even Leinster, Dublin excepted.

gency of Divine worship, though the Roman Catholics are very reasonably precluded by law from voting on such occasions. In one instance, they have proceeded to such extravagance as to nail up a church \*; to forbid the curate at his peril to officiate, though the rector was disabled by age and infirmities; and to force the clerk to swear not to attend him: In another, to threaten publicly, and to bind themselves by oath (in presence of one of the church-wardens) to burn a † new church, unless the old one were reserved for a mass-house. Now, if to such violence of a popish mob, assembled in various and numerous bodies, through the entire province of Munster, and part of Leinster and Connaught, provided with arms forced out of the hands of Protestants, and extorting money to purchase ammunition, and defray the expence of their nightly excursions, as well as the support of their confederates under confinement, be added, the connivance of some members of the established church, the supineness of more, the timidity of the generality of magistrates, a corrupt encouragement of these lawless acts in not a few, the difficulty of prevailing on witnesses to appear (not only from the danger of appearing, but from the oaths extorted from them not to appear) against criminals the most notorious ‡, the natural effect

\* The church of Donoghmore, in the diocese of Cloyne.

† In the parish of Glannire, in the diocese of Cork.

‡ The effect of this is proved by the proceedings of the last Assizes in Munster; where, after the multitudes of instances of breaking open houses, robbing the inhabitants of fire-arms, ammunition and money, of incendiary letters, of maiming inoffensive and helpless persons, and other capital crimes, notoriously committed in every quarter of the province, by many different parties.



effect of the impunity of such criminals, is the consequent temporary subversion of the provision for the established clergy, which, if continued, must terminate in the extinction of the order. As the danger, though by no means remote, may be too distant for the short sight of the bulk of the people, and much industry is employed to blind them, by treating this insurrection as a matter of little moment; it becomes the indispensable duty of such as by situation were enabled, and by duty are called on to watch its progress, to  *speak out*, not fearing, though not wishing, to give offence; and to sound the alarm, whilst it is  *yet time*. For, though a perfect reliance may be had on the good intentions of Government; yet, in a constitution like ours, and in a case which comes home to the breast of every Protestant, it is expedient, in order to facilitate the execution of those good intentions, that the people at large should be informed of their true interest, and their real situation.

Speaking of the necessity of excluding Papists, as much as possible, from political influence, he urges, among other things,

parties of men, each amounting to several hundreds; so that the number of persons guilty of capital felonies, must have amounted to thousands; only  *two*  persons were capitally convicted, and not one in the extensive county of Cork, where the outrages were at least as flagrant and general as in any other. The cause is obvious. Witnesses did not dare to appear. And the repetition of like offences since the Assizes, when all disputes about tithes were at an end for the current year; the continuance of assembling in numerous well-armed bodies, and passing winter-nights in levying money, and taking fire-arms forcibly and feloniously from the Protestants, a proceeding which now extends to the province of Leinster, within less than 50 miles of the capital; are proofs too pregnant of the effect of the impunity of their associates, and of their future intentions.

P. 21—24. The security which an oath of allegiance could give, does not apply to the danger of *undermining* the ecclesiastical establishment in a *peaceable* manner, within the forms of the constitution. Were the Roman Catholic freeholder allowed to vote for a member of Parliament, (for instance) would he not have influence over his representative, even if he did not claim *a right to instruct him*? Must he not, as a conscientious Christian, wish the (quiet) establishment of what he thinks the true church; and contribute every thing, consistent with the laws of his country, to suppress heresy? How would such a proceeding clash with his oath of allegiance to the King, or his disavowal of the Pope's authority in the temporal affairs of the kingdom?—But it may be suggested, that the terms of the oath might in future be extended to comprehend the entire constitution; and then the Protestant ascendancy would be secure. I am ready to believe, that many individual Roman Catholics are men of such integrity that they would adhere to such an oath, if they thought proper to take it; for men are often better than their tenets. But what would their Church say? I need not conjecture. The reader will see a direct decision of this point by the legate at Brussels, Ghilini Archbishop of Rhodes, who had the superintendence of the Romish Church in Ireland, in his letter to the (titular) archbishop of Dublin, in the year 1768, when an oath of allegiance for the Roman Catholics of this country was in contemplation. The letter was published by Thomas de Burgo, (Burke) titular bishop of Ossory, and public historiographer to the Dominican order in Ireland, in his appendix to his *Hibernia Dominicana*, printed in 1772;  
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and, together with three similar ones to the other three (titular) metropolitans, filed by the bishop, *Literæ verè aureæ, cedroque dignæ* \*. The legate treats the clauses in the proposed oath, containing a declaration of abhorrence and detestation of the doctrines, "That faith is not to be kept with heretics, and that princes deprived by the Pope, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects," as absolutely *intolerable*; because, says he, those doctrines are defended, and contended for, by most Catholic nations, and the Holy See has frequently followed them in practice. On the whole, he decides, that "as the oath is in its whole extent unlawful, so in its nature it is invalid, null, and of no effect, so that it can by no means bind and oblige consciences." That similar decisions, on the validity of oaths detrimental to the interests of the Holy See, were uniformly made, whenever such occasions offered, by successive Popes, is well known. The prudent Protestant will therefore judge, what effect such a decision on any future oath might have on the Roman Catholic populace of Ireland, from the degree of respect paid by them to oaths in general, (which is not increased by the late proceedings in Munster!) and the degree of their bigotry; even if there were no other source of dislike to the Protestant government. I am aware, that there is a distinction between the Gallican and other Roman Catholics. But what proportion of the Popish inhabitants of this kingdom, would know what is meant by the Gallican Church? Who is the authorised voucher of its doctrines, to be set in opposition

\* It is inserted at length, in the end of the Bishop of Cloyne's pamphlet.

position to the *legate* of the *Pope*? We may judge, what will be the doctrines of the (titular) bishops, by the clauses in their oath at consecration, which follow \*.

“ The Roman Papacy, and the royalties of St. Peter, I will, saving my own order, assist them (the Pope and his successors) to retain and defend against every man. The rights, honours, privileges, and authority of the holy Roman Church, and of our Lord the Pope, and his successors aforesaid, I will be careful to preserve, defend, *enlarge*, and promote. All Heretics, Schismatics, and rebels against our said Lord, and his successors aforesaid, I will to the utmost of my power, prosecute [the term *persequar* is ambiguous] and oppose.” Will he then be likely to use his influence over his flock, to enforce the obligation of an oath, derogatory from the royalties of St. Peter, and the authority of the holy Roman Church, and calculated to give stability to heresy? Will he not think that oath *malum in se*; and rather to be repented of than kept? He would not (I allow) absolve the man of the guilt of having taken it, without his repentance; but he would probably say, (as the Roman Catholic prelates of Munster very properly declared, with regard to the oaths extorted by the White-Boys) that the observation of it would aggravate the guilt.

P. 84. In Ireland, the Protestants are not one fourth of the people.

P. 93—97. The Oakboys in the north, in the year 1763, were for a short time almost as violent, and overran several counties like a torrent;

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\* The whole oath is inserted in the appendix to the Bishop's pamphlet.

But a severe check or two from the army dispersed, and a few capital punishments effectually quelled them. The popular fury not being stirred, or afterwards kept up by designing men, had no root, and soon died away. But the present proceeding is not a paroxysm of frenzy, originating with ignorant and rash peasants; but a dark and deep scheme, planned by men skilled in law, and the artifices by which it may be evaded. These enemies to the public peace, and the Protestant clergy, (though nominal Protestants), suggested to the farmers to enter into a combination under the sanction of an oath, not to take their tithes, or to assist any clergyman in drawing them: and a form of summons to the clergyman to draw, penned with legal accuracy, was printed at Cork, at the expence of a gentleman of rank and fortune; and many thousand copies of it circulated with diligence through the adjacent counties of Limerick, Kerry and Tipperary. In order to render these oaths universal, the Whiteboys, sometimes in numerous bodies, sometimes by delegates from such bodies, tendered the oath above mentioned (without any further threat, than that of taking a list of those who did not swear) at the Romish chapels, and market towns. At the same time, to avoid the appearance of intending to rob the clergy of their whole maintenance, they published, and the newspapers copied a tithing-table; which, however, was never generally adopted by them, or adhered to by those who professed to adopt it. The rates proposed by their several parties, varied in different parishes, and in the same parish at different times. In some parishes, they were followed by a resolution, to admit no composition for tithes. It is an evidence



dence that the poor were not the authors of this disturbance, and that their relief was not the real object of their promoters; that the White-Boys did not aim to render *potatoes* tithe-free, but, from the beginning, insisted on annihilating the payment of tithe for *hay*. But the most liberal tithing-table, held forth by any of their parties, would have reduced the income of the clergy to such a level, as must have shut up a large proportion of the churches in every part of the kingdom: in Connaught would have left few remaining.——This combination, as the contrivers of it well knew, was as effectual to deprive the clergyman of almost his whole income, as forcible opposition; and had tithes been their only object, they had no motive to proceed further. But this did not content them. *They took the arms out of the hands of Protestants, whom they could not suspect of employing them in defence of tithes.* They levied ammunition, and money for the express purpose of purchasing ammunition, as well as of providing for their support; (though their earnestness to arm themselves cannot be accounted for by any *present* necessity of securing themselves, or any efforts *hitherto* made by them to oppose his Majesty's troops). They proceeded to greater acts of violence: to force individuals who had taken tithe, to swear to break through their agreement, to menace and ill-treat persons who served processes, or should appear at the assizes to prove contracts for tithes; to commit savage acts of cruelty on the *servants* of the clergy; at last to attack *their persons*; to force them to swear to give up their property; and even to demand a surrender of old tithe-notes; to prepare graves for

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them;

them ; and to threaten some with tortures and death. They intimidated vestries from levying money for the repair of churches \*, for the payment of the legal salary of the officers attending the church, or the purchase of elements for the holy communion ; nailed up one church ; bound themselves by oath to burn another. They broke open jails ; set fire to hay and corn ; and even to houses, especially those occupied by the army ; and at last had the audacity to threaten the cities of Limerick and Cork, and the town of Ennis, the capital of Clare, with famine ; and to take measures for interrupting a supply of provisions, by public menaces to fishermen and farmers. They threatened to burn the town of Newmarket in the diocese of Cloyne, unless a White-Boy confined there was released. In addition to these public outrages, the silent mischief occasioned by them cannot be calculated. But I think I may venture to affirm, on the strength of my own observation during the whole summer, and on a very extensive correspondence, I may say, through the whole county of Cork, (the diocese of Cork and Ross having been put under my care in some degree by their worthy Bishop, during his absence for the recovery of his health), that so general a terror of violence from the common people prevails, that few persons, if any, think it prudent to distrain for rent, or to process for debt. A like report has been made to me by gentlemen of the county of Kerry. Into this state of savage anarchy they have reduced the province of Munster, and

\* Since the first edition of this pamphlet, the author has received an official account from a parish in his diocese, that the inhabitants had recovered payment of a church rate, and rescued the goods distrained.

and continue their nightly expeditions for their grand objects, that of disarming the Protestants, and arming themselves, not only in that province, but in that of Leinster, within 50 miles of the capital. What were the motives, let the measures declare: what will be the effect on the Protestant religion and interest, and of course on the connexion of this kingdom with Great Britain, unless the Legislature shall take a firm decided part, is too evident.

P. 100—104. Since this letter was sent to the press, a letter addressed to the public on the subject of tithes, intended as an answer to Theophilus, has appeared in print. This letter-writer controverts some facts, for which I can produce as vouchers, not vague reports, but original documents, or copies of such documents, ready to be attested on oath, or affidavits of most respectable men.—The letter-writer says, p. 8. “ I believe  
“ there are but two instances of any personal at-  
“ tack on clergymen. The one indeed was  
“ treated in a very inhuman and savage manner,  
“ without the least cause that I have heard; but  
“ the other made himself obnoxious, by officiat-  
“ ing otherwise than as a clergyman; so that, on  
“ the whole, I see no cause for the alarm given  
“ by Theophilus, where he insinuates that the  
“ clergy labour under the continual apprehension  
“ of being put to the cruelest tortures, or massa-  
“ cred by a savage banditti in the day, or burned  
“ in their beds by nocturnal incendiaries.\*.” I

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\* By his description of the cases, I conceive he alludes to two clergymen in the diocese of Cashel: one of whom was taken out of his bed, carried away naked, and treated as he describes; but

take it for granted, from this writer's professed candour, that he must consider a threat to take away a man's life, or burn his house, if he does not give up his property, as (virtually) a personal attack. Now, of this my diocese alone furnishes numerous instances. One clergyman (a dignitary in my cathedral) was forced to come out of his house at midnight, by a band of 150 ruffians, to swear that he would give up his legal rights; a gun being pointed close to his head whilst the oath was tendered; and a horse produced with a saddle full of spikes, on which he was to be mounted, if he refused to swear: A second was menaced, (with dreadful imprecations), that he should meet a most *horrible reception*, if he did not obey their laws more punctually, though he by a public notice had declared submission: A third, (with like imprecations), that he should be treated *inhumanly* and *barbarously*: A fourth, that he should be severely punished if he dared to officiate: A fifth, if he did not discontinue a suit at law; and a sixth, that his house should be burnt: A seventh had his house (in the town of Mallow) broken open at midnight, and his bed-chamber entered by a number of armed men, who forced him to give up his horses for their use: An eighth narrowly escaped a visit from

If in the second he alludes to a clergyman, who, in consequence of his acting as a magistrate, was attempted to be assassinated, he has not been fully informed of the case; for the same gentleman had been before violently assaulted by the White-Boys, had some of his ribs broken, was obliged to take refuge in his church (where he was confined a whole night) at a time when he was acting as a parish minister in the management of his tithe, in the very manner prescribed by the White-Boys, that is, without the assistance of a Proctor.

from 300 men, having just before their arrival quitted the house where he usually resided: A ninth had his house surrounded in the dead of night by 100 men for several hours, who endeavoured to force his gates; the terror nearly occasioned the death of his daughter, who was brought to bed the night before (a fact which the assailants, who were his near neighbours, must have known), and, by his anxiety for her, impaired the health of the father. Though he sent word to the insurgents, that he would give up the whole of his tithes rather than endanger the life of his child, they did not forbear their visits; but repeated them, with the addition of shocking cruelty to a poor labourer employed by him, whom they took naked out of his bed, brought to the gate of this clergyman, and whipt him severely there, requiring him at every stroke to cry out to his master, though they knew the cries would be heard by his daughter, who was still confined to her bed: A tenth received a written message from the White-Boys, declaring, with their usual imprecations, that if he intended *such villany* as to set tithe at the old rates, *they had prepared a pitched shirt for him, in which they would set him on fire*: The eleventh, (a gentleman still more respectable for his character, than his very advanced age), after 44 years residence in his parish, where he had been a constant benefactor to the poor, received repeated messages, that his barn (a thatched building contiguous to his house) should be burnt, and he taken out of his bed: and he exhibited a spectacle, which would have disgraced the most uncivilized country, of the dwelling of a man so venerable, protected for a length of time by a military



itary guard. A band of 300 White-Boys advanced within a mile of his house, on the first night appointed for the attack of it; but turned back, on hearing that it was guarded by soldiers. This outrage happened within 13 miles of Cork, on the very day that Lord Luttrell left that city on his progress to Kerry.—In the dioceses of Cork and Ross, two clergymen, resident on their respective glebes, were attacked by numerous bodies of White-Boys, and compelled to swear that they would conform to their rules. Two others were obliged to retain military guards for a considerable length of time in their houses; one of whom had five of his horses cropped, from spite that his house was secure. The houses of both these gentlemen were visited by the insurgents. A fifth may be said to have narrowly escaped a personal attack; for another gentleman, who was mistaken for him, was knocked off his horse, and very severely beaten; and, but for a timely discovery of the mistake, by the assailants mentioning the name of the clergyman, would probably have been killed. Many of the clergymen of these dioceses, received threatening letters and messages: in consequence of which menaces, two of them took refuge in Cork. \* A clergyman, now resident in Cork, a fortnight since received a White-Boy message, that his ears should be cropped, and his tongue cut out of his mouth. On the whole, all the clergy in the extensive county of Cork (of whom only I speak with the support of authentic proofs), whose places of residence

\* Of this last fact I have no other voucher, than a printed paper transmitted to me by a dignified clergyman in the diocese of Cork. But I am convinced of the truth of it.

sidence were in the country, were under continual alarm, and obliged to arm themselves in the best manner they could ; and had they not yielded to the violence of the insurgents, I am persuaded would have been personally ill-treated ; perhaps buried in those graves, which were in many places dug (professedly) for their reception.

P. 105, 106.—The Letter-writer reproaches Theophilus severely, for calling these lawless people “ a Popish banditti, spirited up by agitating friars, “ and Romish missionaries, sent hither on purpose to sow sedition.” I cannot help thinking the Letter-writer goes far, in asserting that no such friars or missionaries have been found in this country. Though I do not know on what authority Theophilus speaks, I can very well conceive, that he may think the letters of Mr O’Leary *calculated* to sow sedition. I do not say that the reverend author intends, much less that he is sent *hither on purpose* ; but in my poor opinion, (which has however the sanction of every rational man, with whom I have conversed on the subject), his publications tend (and if such *were* his design, are most *artfully contrived*) to produce that effect.—That the Letter-writer and the public may judge from Mr O’Leary’s general positions, the Bishop gives them in his own words, from p. 106.—111. Addressing himself to the insurgents, whom he conceives to be of his own religious persuasion, at that time assembled in numerous armed bodies, for the avowed purpose of robbing the established clergy of their rights, he says, “ I know you are “ oppressed and impoverished more than any “ set of the lower classes of people upon earth. “ —These disturbances originate in the dues of the  
the

“ the clergy.—I would rather pay my tithes,  
 “ let them be ever so oppressive, than put my  
 “ neck in the halter, by violating the laws of the  
 “ realm, let them be ever so severe.—The se-  
 “ verer the clauses of the White-Boy act are, the  
 “ more you should be on your guard. Consider  
 “ the danger to which you are exposed from the  
 “ logic and eloquence of Crown lawyers, the  
 “ perjuries of witnesses, and the prejudices of ju-  
 “ ries. I am informed that the one, who is to  
 “ swear against some of you who are in gaol, is  
 “ one of the greatest villains in the kingdom, and  
 “ escaped the gallows some years ago.”—After  
 expatiating on the severity of the laws against  
 them, *as not being fit for a Christian country*, and  
 warning them that they could not expect a fair  
 execution, even of those cruel ordinances, from  
 the law-officers of the Crown, the witnesses or  
 jury; I think one may say with justice, of *his ad-  
 dress to the common people of Ireland, particularly  
 such of them as are called White-Boys*, printed Dub-  
 lin 1786, that it is calculated to raise discontent  
 and indignation in the Roman Catholic peasantry,  
 against the National clergy, the Legislature, the  
 executive power, and their Protestant fellow-  
 subjects. It is not entirely superfluous to observe,  
 how much such an impeachment of the character  
 of a witness, by a man out of court, and not sworn,  
 was calculated to give an unfair prejudice to the  
 juries in favour of the White-Boys who were then  
 in gaol.

## NUMBER VII.

*Traité de la vérité de la religion Chretienne. Par*  
 JA. VERNET. *Tom. 8. & 9. Lausanne 1782, &*  
*Tom. 10. Genev. 1788. i. e. A Treatise on the*  
 Truth of the Christian Religion by James Vernet.

**D**R VERNET, Professor of divinity at Geneva, began the publishing of this work 1730. The first seven volumes, designed as an enlargement and improvement of the younger Turretine's Latin dissertations on the truth of Christianity, though they possess considerable merit, perhaps will not convey much new information to those who have perused the best English writers against Deism.—It is otherwise with the 8th, 9th, and 10th volumes.—In them much light is cast on the rapid propagation of Christianity in the first centuries; on the evidence of the authenticity of the books of the New Testament, and of the certainty of the principal facts recorded in them, from the testimonies and conduct of Jews and Heathens, who partially received, or wholly rejected the religion of Jesus; and on other important articles of church history. Indeed, Dr Lardner, in his large collection of Jewish and Heathen testimonies, has engaged in these enquiries, with much greater extent of learning, and depth of criticism. Yet, the largeness of that work, and of his credibility of the gospel history, has, in Scotland, prevented their being so generally read and known, as their distinguished excellence deserve; and even those best acquainted with Dr Lardner's writings, may find some ingenious, and, if I mis-  
 take

take not, original remarks on those subjects, in my extracts from Dr Vernet. I thought not myself at liberty to omit even those passages, where his reasonings appear to me inconclusive, and I am persuaded would have appeared so to the author, if he had read Lord Hailes's *Disquisitions concerning the Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Glasgow, 1783 \*. What is generally known or well-handled in books, to which my readers may have easy access, I judged it unnecessary to transcribe.

In an advertisement prefixed to the last volume, and dated 3d July 1788, the author says, " Among the favours with which it has pleased God to crown my old age, one is, my having been enabled to finish my principal work, which has employed two thirds of a long life. The slowness with which one volume followed another, and which was occasioned by other necessary business, has been useful to my work. The new form, which the great controversy it handles has assumed in sixty years, has given me occasion to refute many new reasonings, and to advance many things, of which Turretine and others had been silent. The particular manner in which I have considered my last argument, t. 8th, 9th and 10th, has carried me much further than my original guide; and that  
" part

\* His remains of Christian antiquity, 3 volumes; his translations of Minucius Felix's *Octavius*, and of Lactantius on the death of the persecutors; his disquisitions concerning the antiquities of the Christian church; and especially his enquiry into the secondary causes which Mr Gibbons has assigned for the rapid growth of Christianity, would have been admired in days, when the knowledge of sacred criticism was less rare, and when the value of it was more justly estimated.



“ part of my work will perhaps appear the most  
 “ new and curious.”——He takes notice, that  
 bad health had obliged him, in 1786, to decline  
 his public functions ; and claims indulgence for  
 the defects of the last volume, published in the  
 90th year of his age.

Tom. viii. c. 13.—The Ebionites were the only  
 heretics among the Christians of the two first cen-  
 turies. They acknowledged the miracles of Christ,  
 and their numbers were so inconsiderable, that  
 Irenæus, l. 1. c. 3. represents the faith of Chris-  
 tian churches as every where the same, though the  
 Ebionites did not think as other Christians, as to  
 the nature and dignity of Christ, used only Mat-  
 thew’s gospel, and observed circumcision, and o-  
 ther Mosaic rites. It appears from Irenæus, i. 26.  
 that the Gnostics were not considered as a Chris-  
 tian sect, but as men who meant to corrupt Chris-  
 tianity by their philosophic ideas, and to whom  
 the church opposed the uniform doctrine of the  
 apostles. If the Alogi rejected John’s Gospel,  
 that very rejection proves that John’s Gospel then  
 existed.

C. 14. The Gnostics were philosophers in Asia  
 Minor, who adopted the tenets of the Persian  
 Magi. Impostors among them, as Simon, Me-  
 nander, Saturninus, &c. pretended to divination  
 and miraculous powers, in order to derogate from  
 Christian miracles. Others, perceiving that these  
 last were above all imitation, and yet addicted to  
 their old philosophy, endeavoured to incorporate  
 it into the Christian doctrine, especially among  
 the Heathen : for, accounting the world the pro-  
 duction of an evil principle, they naturally re-  
 jected the Old Testament, where the true God is

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represented

represented as Creator of heaven and earth. Their idea of matter, as the work of the evil principle, led them to deny the resurrection of the body. Many passages in Paul's epistles to the Colossians and Timothy, and in Peter's 2d epistle, warn against their first attempts. When John wrote his first epistle, some of them had gone further, and asserted that Christ's body was only aërial, not composed of flesh and blood. They did not, however, openly discover themselves till the end of the life of St John. See 1 *Jo.* ii. 19. And hence Hegesippus, a historian of the second century, apud Eusebium, *hist. eccl.* iii. 32. and iv. 22. asserts, that, till the time of the Emperor Trajan, the church knew no heresies. Irenæus writing, about the year 173, against the different sects of the Gnostics, assigns them the same æra, iii. 23. v. 20, and always considers them as philosophic sects. Clemens Alexandrinus, *Strom.* vii. near the end, makes these heretics of no older a date than Adrian and Antoninus Pius. And Tertullian de præscript. c. 29, 30, 32, observes, that the question, What was the doctrine of Christ? may easily be answered from the writings of his first disciples, and their verbal instructions in every place, the remembrance of which was preserved in the churches they founded. The Gnostics therefore appeared 100 years too late for invalidating that testimony.

C. 15. The Docetæ, in attempting to account for, acknowledge the appearances recorded in the Gospels.—In the 2d century, the venerable old men who had lived with the apostles, and received from them the imposition of hands, were a strong barrier against the Gnostics, by their testimony

mony of the apostolic doctrine. Yet, Christians were then still better fortified against innovations in doctrine, by the writings of the apostles, now collected together. The Gnostics, incapable of arraigning the authenticity of these writings, pretended that Jesus had a public doctrine for the vulgar, and such disciples as the apostles, who were only proper for witnessing outward facts; and a secret doctrine imparted to those of a more enlightened and philosophic cast. Without contradicting the facts in the New Testament, they pretended, that the apostles, blinded by Jewish prejudices, often mistook their Lord's doctrine. Cerinthus was perhaps the only Jew who adopted the Gnostic philosophy. As he could not deny the miracles of Christ, attested by so many living witnesses, and even acknowledged by many of the Gnostics, he attempted to explain the dignity of Christ's person from the oriental philosophy, and represented him as an Æon of the first rank, who had, at the baptism of Jesus, united himself with his humanity, and retired from him at his death. See Irenæus, iii. 2. The same striking evidences of Christ's miracles, led Carpocrates, under the Emperor Adrian, to add to the philosophy of the Magi and of Plato, a tincture of corrupt Christianity, and to represent Jesus as teaching a double doctrine. Though on account of the defects in the creation and Mosaic law, the Cainites ascribed both to a being less perfect than the Supreme: yet they admitted the union of the divine and human natures in Jesus, and the account of his life and miracles recorded by the Evangelists.—Some have ascribed to Basilides a new gospel: but Beaufobre hist. du Manicheisme,

cheisme, t. 2. p. 3. has shown that he only published an explication of the Gospel.—Marcion, according to Irenæus, i. 29. retrenched from Luke's Gospel, what regards the generation of our Lord, and passages both in the Gospels and Epistles, which represent God the Father as Creator of the universe, or which appeal to Old Testament prophecies of Christ. This, however, was not denying our Lord's miracles. Justin Martyr, Apol. 1. tells us, that the Marcionites were not molested in times of persecution. We need not wonder at this ; for Gnostics scrupled not, on such occasions, to declare that they were not Christians, by sacrificing to idols.

C. 16. The Valentinians, Marcionites, &c. were all Gnostics. Only, their different schools varied in their manner of combining the oriental philosophy with the history of Christ. Meantime, though struck with the miracles of Jesus, they endeavoured to introduce themselves into the Church, to sow their errors : they were not accounted Christians, because they renounced not their Pagan philosophy, and, under various pretexts, disregarded the authority of the Apostles, denied that the Supreme God was creator of the world, and derided the Old Testament. The Manichees had as good, and the Mahometans a much better title to the Christian name. Their testimony, however, so far as it has any weight, confirms, instead of contradicting the history of Christ's miracles. They denied not, that the Gospels were written in the age, and by the authors whose names they bear. They alleged not, that they were forged by Christians of later times. As manuscripts spread less quickly than printed books, many of the  
early

early Gnostics might not have read the Gospels, and might learn the miracles from general reports of what was publicly done, and from less exact accounts, which early appeared. The first who proposed doubts of the authenticity of the Gospel, was Faustus the Manichean, in a debate with Augustine, about the beginning of the 5th century. The Gnostic philosophers made the first advances to the Church. Yet, neither the flattering prospect of aid from their learning and eloquence, nor the danger of provoking their resentment, prevailed on her, by admitting them to her communion, to open a door for their pernicious errors. Nothing could produce this delicacy, unless a certainty of the things wherein they had been instructed, and of the guilt and hazard of forsaking them. Yet these philosophers, after the Church had refused all alliance with them, continued to own these miraculous facts, which their living high Judea afforded them the best opportunities for examining. The facts they believed. Their only labour was, how to reconcile them with their philosophy. This was the case, not with one sect of Gnostics only, but with many who had separate schools, and explained differently the facts in which they all agreed. They were not prepared for thus receiving Christian miracles, by those recorded in the Old Testament; for they reject d it, and acknowledged Jesus not as King of Israel, but as a Saviour descended from Heaven for all nations. This idea they derived not from the writings of the Apostles; for, prompted by philosophic pride and prejudice, they rejected the doctrines of these writings, and employed their exquisite subtilty and refinement



for reconciling things inconsistent. No account can be given, that, biassed as they were against the theology, they should admit the miracles of the New Testament, unless that these last were so recent, so well known, and so fully proved, that they could find no flaw in their evidence, though genius, perverted by inclination, suggested to them the most extravagant schemes for disputing away the consequences of these facts. Such is the true key of their absurdities. If it does little honour to their judgment, and even to their integrity, it gives an additional proof of facts, which almost passed under their eyes, and which they had no temptation to have allowed, if they had not been constrained by full conviction. If Athenian philosophers, convinced of the wonderful works of Christ, yet unwilling to change their philosophy, or to renounce their idol worship, had taken any such middle part, their assent to the facts of the Gospel would not have lost its weight by their enmity to its doctrines. Happily, however, not only Athenagoras and Justin Martyr, Platonists; and Pantæus a Stoic, but Clemens Alexandrinus and Origen, who were Gnostics, consented to be taught by the Apostles of Christ.

C. 17. It has been alleged, that none of the earlier fathers in the first century mention our Gospels, and that Justin Martyr is the first who cites them; so that probably they were forged about the year 130, the prevailing party wishing to change the faith of the Church, and to introduce new Gospels, which should gradually make the old forgotten. In this they succeeded, and the Christianity of 1700 years rests on that false basis. —To this I reply: "The Gospels were collected,

lected, and the churches instructed by them, at least 30 years before Justin, though the verbal testimony of the Elders who had heard the Apostles, rendered till then frequent citations of them unnecessary." Cited, however, they were by Barnabas, Clemens Romanus, Ignatius and Polycarp. —Indeed, at that time, it was usual to cite less exactly than now : and the Fathers had small occasion for exactness, when addressing those to whom the Gospels and Epistles were familiar. In the dispute with the Gnostics, at the beginning of the second century, both parties cited them. Justin, in his *Apology to Antoninus Pius*, A. D. 142, observes, that the memoirs of the Apostles, and writings of the ancient Prophets, were read on Sundays in their assemblies. Irenæus, writing, in 173, against the Gnostics, who pretended to know, better than the Apostles did, what was the doctrine of Christ ; was led to relate by whom, when, and on what occasion the books of the New Testament were written.—The use of the Apocryphal Gospels by the Apostolical Fathers is no objection. Citations from them are not numerous, and they are mostly from the Gospel of the Egyptians, the most antient, known, and esteemed among them. We may easily suppose, that these might contain some less important events of our Lord's life, not recorded in our Gospels, but at that time known by tradition. These books, however, were not cited to prove doctrines, but as we cite the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament, or the Apostolical Fathers. Though authentic, or not forged, they were considered as the works of uninspired and less informed writers, and so of much inferior authority.

city. The antiquity of some of them shows, that Jesus was not an obscure person, since many of his cotemporaries wrote his history, agreed in the most important facts with our Gospels, and on that account were cited with approbation, after the canon of the New Testament was completed, while none pled their testimony to refute the facts narrated in our sacred books. When the inspired books became generally known, and were translated into Latin and Syriac; without any formal decree, the apocryphal ones were more rarely transcribed, and gradually fell into oblivion.

C. 18. Deists plead, that the first Christians discovered how easily romances might be imposed upon them instead of real history, by the many forged gospels long received as true, and even by the Apostolical Fathers cited with honour.— But what will a bare possibility of a Gospel's being forged in the second century, prove, in opposition to clear testimonies, that our Gospels existed in the first? Besides, these books were called Apocryphal, as written by persons less known, and of less authority than the Apostles: not as containing false, or at least doubtful histories. They were not false in their titles, for they bore no name; and their authors being unknown, was a chief reason why they were termed apocryphal. I might observe the same thing of many pieces relating to the lives and sermons of the apostles. Men who had seen or heard Peter, or Thomas, or Paul, naturally collected and put into writing what they remembered. Indeed, every day remarkable events are recorded by authors who conceal their names, and thus diminish their authority, especially as some of them, though honest, may

may be very imperfectly informed. The Pastor of Hermes was not anonymous, and probably on that account was longer read than any other of the apocryphal books. Yet even that was not general, and soon ceased. False gospels are indeed ascribed to Basilides, the Valentinians, &c. But these Gnostics were not accounted Christians, appeared not till the second century, and rather misinterpreted the true Gospels, than forged false ones under the names of the apostles. Possibly the intitling them, The Preaching of Peter, &c. was only an ingenious fiction, like that which Plato, Cicero, and modern writers of dialogue have used, without any intention of deceiving. Forgeries might have been easy to a party long in power, in the 12th century; which in the second century were impossible. Pious and humble bishops, united under no head, employed in teaching their people, and guarding them against renouncing their profession, to whatever sufferings it might expose them; would never have conspired to alter the received belief, to destroy the old and generally received Gospels, and to substitute in their place new ones under false names. Had they formed so base a design, they would rather have composed one complete and uniform Gospel, than four, in which there are many seeming contradictions; and would rather have recommended their forgeries by the names of James and Peter, than of Mark and Luke, who were not apostles. Nor could they have palmed on the world spurious Gospels, as written by Matthew and John; for the Ebionites, a separate sect, possessed Matthew's Gospel in Hebrew for near a century; and many who knew John must have been alive 30  
years



years after his death, and able to testify whether he was author of the Gospel ascribed to him. Least of all can it be accounted for, why the Gnostics did not charge the orthodox with such a forgery. It was impossible to make men renounce writings, till then highly esteemed, in favour of others hitherto never mentioned. What could instigate to so difficult and treacherous an attempt? It could not be intended for gaining credit to the miracles of Jesus; for they were recorded even in the apocryphal Gospels, and performed too publicly to admit of the least doubt.

Tom. ix. C. 19—28, contain an ingenious vindication of Josephus's testimony against the objections of Faber, Lardner, and others. He often cites with approbation *Vindiciæ Flavianæ*, Lon. 1777, a book exceeding rare. The translator, however, passes over these chapters, to make room for extracts, in his view more important.

C. 29. When a nation is divided in their manner of accounting for a phænomenon in nature, or an event in history, that division infers a joint acknowledgment of the fact. Let us apply this observation to the miracles of Jesus. They were acknowledged by those who inferred from them that he was the Messiah; by those, who, without receiving him in that character, considered him as a teacher sent from God, which seems to have been the case with Josephus; by those doubtful what judgment to form, as Gamaliel; nay, even by the Jews, who first ascribed his miracles to magic, and afterwards to his stealing from the sanctuary the pronunciation of the Ineffable Name.——C. 30. Doubtless, had it been



been possible, they would rather have disputed the miracles of Jesus, than have given so ridiculous an account of them. There can be no just suspicion of public and important facts, owned in the age and country in which they happened, by those who must have known their truth or falsehood, and who had every excitement to have exposed their falsehood. The sentiments of the early Jews were divided as to the power by which the miracles of Jesus were wrought, not as to their reality.

C. 31. The Gospel-history proves Pilate's conviction of Jesus's innocence. Early writers urge, as a proof of the same thing, the account he sent to Tiberius of our Lord's crucifixion. I acknowledge his two letters to that Emperor, inserted in Fabricii Cod. Apoc. N. T. Tom. 1. p. 295, were forgeries, the one of the 5th century, and the other still later. But if the public records had not contained real Acts favourable to Christ's miracles, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, &c. durst not have appealed to them so boldly. The depriving Christians of this advantage, probably instigated the persecutor Maximinus to forge, and cause to be read in schools, Acts, in which Pilate was introduced speaking injuriously of Jesus. See Euseb. Hist. Eccl. I. 9. and IX. 5. That forgery was, however, soon exposed, and the true Acts continued to be cited, not indeed as still existing, for the archives had been destroyed in the third century, but as Acts, the contents of which were sufficiently known by tradition. See Euseb. Chronic. and Hist. Eccl. II. 12., and Orosius VII. 2.—

C. 23. Tertullian Apol. c. 5. represents Tiberius, as proposing to the Senate, in consequence of the  
account

account sent him by Pilate, that Christ should be added to the Gods; and the Senate refusing, because they had not first enquired into the matter. He relates this, not as an argument for Christianity, but for exposing the Heathen idea of deity being conferred by the will of man. Eusebius *Chronic. and Hist. Eccl. and Chrysostome Hom.* 37. in 2. Ep. ad Cor., mention the same thing: and Orosius, VII. 2. adds particulars neither recorded by Tertullian or Eusebius, which prove that he did not copy from them.——C. 33. Justin being a stranger at Rome, might be informed of the Acts of Pilate, by some person, perhaps a Christian, who had access to the imperial registers. Of Tiberius's proposal and the Senate's refusal, he might be ignorant, as they were not in these records, but in the archives of the Senate in the Capitol, which had been burnt when Vitellius was Emperor. It was otherwise with Tertullian, more learned than Justin, less a stranger at Rome, having, as a lawyer, access to all the archives of law and history, living, too, 50 years later, when the number of learned Christians at Rome had increased, and the curiosity of some of them might have led to searches and discoveries, for which Justin had no opportunity. If you ask, Where Tertullian learned what he tells us of Tiberius? I ask, in my turn, Where did Tacitus, Suetonius, Dion Cassius, Herodian, &c. learn the many important facts which they have recorded, as to a period long before their own? Without doubt they consulted cotemporary authors now lost, or knew the facts from tradition, or from family and private memoirs in the hands of the curious. Iselin names ten authors who report anecdotes of Rome, not  
to

to be found in any of the greater Roman histories. See his letter inserted *Bibliothèque Germanique*, T. 32. and 33. It is not in a private letter that Tertullian mentions this, but in an apology directed to the rulers of the empire, to whom he would not have dared to mention such transactions, as passing between the Emperor and Senate, if they had not been of public notoriety. It need not surprise, that Suetonius says nothing of this. He studies brevity, and omits many important particulars related by Tacitus, as Tacitus omits others, which Suetonius has preserved. If the silence of the one is no objection against the relation of the other, why should the silence of both invalidate accounts in a third writer of credit? Unhappily, Tacitus's account of the 15th, 16th, and 17th years of Tiberius, when this proposal must have happened, are lost. If it be pled, that the manner in which he speaks of Christ in his history, does not suppose that he had spoken of him in his annals, this is of no weight, for he composed his history before his annals.

C. 34. The character of Tiberius confutes not the narration in question. He might credit, and be struck with the miracles related by Pilate, though depravity hindered his practically improving them as he ought. His study of magic might convince him, that it could not account for the wonderful works of Jesus. Indifferent to the religion of his country, he would less scruple proposing an addition to her gods. Possibly he made the proposal, to favour some of his own domestics, who ascribed divinity to Christ, and who might otherwise have been prosecuted, as introducing a new religion, or as addicted to that Jewish worship,

ship, which, 12 years before, the Senate had proscribed. For distinguishing Christians from Jews, and procuring the former a toleration, he might think it the best plan, to admit Christ, as *Æsculapius* had been admitted, among the Roman deities. We learn from Philo *legat. ad Caium*, that *Sejanus* had inspired *Tiberius* with aversion to the Jews. He might mean to dishonour and mortify them, by conferring divinity on one whom they had crucified. What could more efface the unjust sentence passed upon Christ by the Sanhedrim, than a decree by the Senate of the world, honouring him with divinity? There is no improbability in *Tiberius* forming such ideas, from any thing in his temper, or former conduct. Strange as the proposal was, it could not be considered as disrespectful to the public religion. He meant not to abrogate the worship of the 12 *Dii majorum gentium*, or to advance Jesus to their honours; but to make his worship as lawful as that of *Isis*, or *Æsculapius*, or *Cæsar*, or *Augustus*, whose deification Pagans considered as consistent with the supremacy of their *Jupiter*, much as Papists view their canonization of saints as consistent with the acknowledgement of one God, and one Mediator between God and man. The historian of *Alexander Severus*, who was undoubtedly a Heathen, tells us, that he worshipped as his household gods, besides some of the deified emperors, *Apollonius*, *Abraham*, Christ, *Orpheus*, as men eminently holy: and that, like *Adrian*, he wished to have built a temple to Christ; but was hindered, by its being urged, that other temples would thus be deserted, and the world become Christian.——  
—Let it not be imagined, that *Tiberius* might have



have deified Christ by his own authority. Supreme inspection over religion, was an ancient and sacred prerogative of the Senate, which probably he could not have invaded without hazard, whatever later emperors might have done. Hence he prudently consulted the Senate on the smallest matters; allowed them freedom of deliberation; and, though he gave his opinion first, was not offended when it was contradicted. We need not be surprised, that the proposal of deifying Christ was rejected by the Senate. It was communicated by Sejanus, not made by the Emperor in person, which considerably diminished its weight. Now, when Rome was mistress of the world, the Senate dreaded the tarnishing the majesty of her old religion, by introducing the deities and rites of so many conquered countries. They revived an old law against foreign religions, to prevent their reception in Italy, not to persecute them in provinces where they were formerly established. With this view, they enacted a law against Jewish and Egyptian ceremonies. The apotheoses of Julius Cæsar and Augustus were not obtained without difficulty: and the flattery and policy which conferred these honours on the late Heads of the empire, forbid bestowing them on strangers, and least of all on a crucified Jew. Besides, the facts pled for the new apotheosis, had not been examined by them, but were only founded on the information of a provincial governor. Orosius tells us, that Sejanus, who delivered the message, secretly endeavoured to prevent its success; and that the Senate, not content to refuse the consecration of Christ, decreed to banish the Christians from Rome. Tiberius, attached to some of that

O 2

profession,



profession, by an edict, threatened death to any who should accuse the Christians. To him as Emperor, the executive power chiefly belonged; and his tribunitial authority entitled him to oppose, and to suspend the effect of a *senatusconsultum*. Thus, in the mixed and undetermined constitution of Rome, the Senate had rights which the Emperor could not infringe, and the Emperor power which the Senate could not restrain. Thus, the Christians enjoyed rest till the tenth year of Nero, who, to justify himself from the charge of burning the city, threw upon them the odium of that crime. Men innocent, he could not prove guilty; and, wicked as he was, it is hardly conceivable he would have murdered so many without any form of justice. Probably he took the advantage of the Senate's decree under Tiberius, banishing them from Rome, for justifying his cruelty against a sect long ago proscribed, and who fraudulently, and contrary to law, remained in Rome.——

If it is not easy to trace the consequences of the protection granted by Tiberius to the Christians at Rome; the effects of it were apparent in Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and other places, which depended immediately on him, and where his authority was greater. Without doubt, he would send orders to protect the Christians against the injuries of the Greeks, and especially of the Jews, of whose animosity against them Pilate had informed him. This explains what we read, *Acts* ix. 31. “Then had the churches rest through all Judea, “and Galilee, and Samaria.” This would be equally true of the churches of Damascus, Antioch and Alexandria, places which were under the immediate direction of the Emperor. The  
period

period referred to, is the five last years of Pilate's, and the beginning of his successor's government ; both of whom, no doubt, entered into the tolerant measures prescribed them : the rather, that Caius, the successor of Tiberius, was still more disposed to restrain the Jews. The same spirit which put Stephen to death, would have produced numerous martyrdoms, had not Tiberius's decree restrained their rage. It was not till the arrival of King Agrippa, under the Emperor Claudius, that they began to treat the apostles, as they had treated their Master. Hence Gildas ascribes it to Tiberius's protection of Christians, in spite of the Senate, that our religion was then propagated without any hinderance.

Tom. x. c. 35. But, why was Seneca, a man of learning, and a philosopher, silent as to Christianity ? especially in his treatise on superstition, now unhappily lost, where he spares not the public religion of the Romans. See Augustine de civitate Dei, vi. 11. \* From Herod's frequent visits to Rome ; from the multitude of Jews who dwelt there, notwithstanding frequent edicts for their expulsion, as appears from Paul's epistle to the Romans, A. D. 57 ; and especially from Judea being reduced to a Roman province: the many changes and commotions there would be much talked of at court, and not unknown to Seneca. His ideas of the absurdity of their ritual, with which Augustine acquaints us in the same passage, might

O 3.

\* That father justly observes, that the philosopher approved: acting a comedy in the temple, by recommending conformity to the religion established by law, though neither rational nor agreeable to the gods.

might hinder his particular enquiries as to their religion, and consequently his knowledge of their excellent theology and morals. The Father, however, expresses his surprise, that on this occasion he says nothing of the Christians. It could not indeed proceed from ignorance. I affirm not, that he had any full knowledge of the history of Christ and of his apostles, and of the new religion which they introduced. The first three gospels were not then collected; and the epistles of Paul, at that time written, were in few hands. But the tumults which Christianity occasioned among the Jews, and Nero's cruel treatment of those who professed it, were publicly known. Paul's first journey to Rome was A. D. 61, while Seneca was yet a minister of state. Gallio might have wrote his brother as to Paul, or at least informed him about him after his return to Rome. There were saints in Cæsar's household, *Phil.* iv. 22.; probably among the slaves Cæsar had set free. The apostle's bonds were known in the palace, *Phil.* i. 13. Seneca could not be ignorant of what passed under his eyes. Some of the saints in Cæsar's household, might communicate to him Paul's epistle to the Romans. All this might contribute to the apostle's favourable treatment; and might lead Seneca, when exposing Greek and Jewish superstitions, to suspend his judgment as to the Christian religion, or at least to keep it to himself. Augustine's account of his silence, is therefore not improbable. " If he had commended the Christians, he might have seemed unfriendly to the ancient rites of his country. " If he had blamed them, his censure would have been contrary to the dictates of his own heart. " It

“ It was no wonder, that under a bad prince, and  
 “ an intriguing court, the philosopher judged  
 “ caution necessary.” Paul’s freedom and return  
 to Asia happened A. D. 63, a year before the  
 burning of Rome.—From Jerome de Scripto-  
 ribus Ecclesiasticis, and Augustine ep. 54. ad Ma-  
 cedonium, there appears to have been an ancient  
 tradition of an epistolary correspondence between  
 Seneca and Paul. It is uncertain whether these  
 fathers meant the letters which have been pub-  
 lished in some editions of Seneca, and inserted in  
 the Codex Apocryphus N. T. by Fabricius, who,  
 with Dupin, inclines to think them forged. Pro-  
 bably the first were genuine billets, written when  
 Paul was at Rome; and the others were forged.  
 The same causes, which contributed to Paul’s  
 kind treatment, when first at Rome, might pro-  
 duce this correspondence with Seneca.

C. 36. The decree of Tiberius, banishing Jews  
 from Rome, was often eluded by general conni-  
 vance, or particular protections. The severity of  
 these laws was revived under Claudius. This  
 may have been occasioned by the Jews banishing  
 from their synagogues, and treating harshly, those  
 of their nation who became Christians. To these  
 disputes Suetonius refers. “ Judæos, impulsore  
 “ Christo, assidue tumultuantes, urbe expulit.”  
 Only he mistakes the name of Christ, and makes  
 him author of seditions, of which he was only  
 the innocent occasion. The effect of this decree,  
 which extended not to Greeks or Romans con-  
 verted to Christianity, must have been short.  
 When Paul wrote to the Romans, A. D. 58, or  
 in the 4th of Nero, he supposes that a consider-  
 able part of them were Jews.—Suetonius’s ac-  
 count of Nero’s barbarous treatment of the Chri-  
 stians

fians is in two lines. “ Afflicti suppliciis Chri-  
 “ stianis genus hominum superstitionis novæ ac  
 “ maleficæ.” He says not when this happened,  
 though, from other accounts, it must have been  
 in the 10th year of Nero, or A. D. 64, a year af-  
 ter Paul’s release. Yet his meagre and superfi-  
 cial account contains three important facts. 1.  
 That Christianity was then a new sect. Indeed,  
 it had begun only under Tiberius. 2. That the  
 Christians were reported to use enchantments..  
 This is the meaning of the word *maleficus*; the mi-  
 racles appealed to in proof of the Gospel, being  
 ascribed to magic \*. 3. That they were severely  
 punished for their religion.—Tacitus employs  
 two pages on the subject: Annal. xv. 44. Yet,  
 philosopher as he was, he says not a word of the  
 doctrine, morals, or worship of the Christians, or  
 of the proofs they offered for their religion. In  
 his political eye, it was a foreign superstition, a  
 sect prohibited by the Senate, and thus exposed  
 to the lash of the law. He is however just e-  
 nough to vindicate the Christians from the charge  
 of having set fire to Rome. He takes notice,  
 that the author of the sect was Christ, who, un-  
 der Tiberius, was punished by Pontius Pilate.  
 This marks the period when Christianity com-  
 menced. He observes that the death of their  
 Head had not extinguished the sect, but that it had  
 extended to many provinces, and even to Rome  
 itself. He says, they were hated by mankind..  
 Indeed, Jews and Heathens slandered and perse-  
 cuted them, and they were destitute of human  
 support. What pity, that Tacitus, convinced of  
 their innocence as to burning Rome, had not  
 searched

\* This sense of the word *maleficus*, is well established in Ep.  
 Watson’s Apology, letter V.



searched into the grounds of other prejudices entertained against them, and discovered them equally unjust. Though he says not how many suffered, he tells us, that for several days and nights, a great multitude of them were cruelly tormented and put to death in different parts of Rome, and even in the Emperor's gardens. The picture he gives of these cruelties, shocking as it is to humanity, is the more precious, as drawn by an able hand, an eye witness, (for in his youth he was the friend of Britannicus), and one no way favourable to the Christians. From him alone, we learn these important particulars; for Josephus omits the fact; and Tertullian only says, that Nero was the first who drew the sword against the Christians. Tacitus neglects an important fact hinted by Suetonius, their being charged with enchantments. He intimates, that it was not so much the rigorous treatment of the Christians, as the odious circumstances accompanying it, and the false motives assigned for it, which drew on Nero the public censure. From this, it is probable, that the Senate's decree in the reign of Tiberius was still in force, having only been suspended by Tiberius and Claudius; so that, on any pretence, Nero could revive and execute it, and punish men, already proscribed, and who had no right to dwell at Rome. It is not improbable, though Tacitus doth not mention it, that in Spain, which was under the particular authority of the Emperor, the magistrates were directed to exterminate the Christians.

C. 37. From Pliny's celebrated epistle to Trajan, we learn the numerousness of the Christians, their persecution, their constancy, their faith,  
their

their manners, their worship. The laws of Domitian remained in vigour. Their precise enactments we know not; a collection of all the edicts against the Christians, made by a lawyer in the 3d century, being lost. Thus Christians were at the mercy of governors of provinces, and municipal magistrates, urged by priests, philosophers, courtiers, or popular clamour, to execute the laws against a sect represented as Atheists, rebels against Cæsar, and enemies to gods and to men. Perhaps Trajan's answer would have been as tolerant as Pliny wished, had it not been, that giving law in religious matters belonged to the Senate, not to the Emperor. Without therefore revoking the established laws; till that was obtained, he could only recommend the executing them in a way more gentle, and which would often suspend their force. Yet, in his reign, even at Rome, Ignatius was exposed to wild beasts.

C. 38. Excellent as Epictetus's moral precepts were, Simplicius, who commented on his manual in the 6th century, approached still nearer the system and language of the New Testament, as to those great foundations of morals, creation, providence, and a future state. Many philosophers from the 4th century, without directly attacking Christianity, have attempted to show that the religion and morals, which good philosophy teaches, were sufficient without it. Epictetus's not mentioning Christianity, as he wrote little, and on a subject which did not lead him to it, is not surprising. The Gospels and Epistles being in few hands, and not collected till the reign of Trajan, probably he and Tacitus never saw them, and knew nothing of the new religion, unless from  
vague

vague reports. On this account, Justin Martyr, in his excellent apology to Antoninus, expressly mentions the sacred writings, and largely explains the Christian faith and worship, then so little known, and so much slandered. The Gnostics, who were nearer Judea, and, from the report of Christ's miracles, considered him as a messenger from Heaven, must have known little of the writings of the apostles, when they attempt to spread their philosophy as the doctrine of Jesus. Arrian relates, that Epictetus, exhorting his disciples to despise death, urged the example of some who rushed upon it through madness, and of those Galileans who exposed themselves to it through custom. Perhaps by the last, he meant the Christians of Galilee. Let it, however, be observed, that he ascribes their courage to habit, not to madness, to which he had ascribed the courage of another class. Now this is not blaming them, unless you censure the soldier whom you represent as habituated to encounter death.

C. 39. Much information as to the Christian faith and manners, was not to be expected from Suetonius or Tacitus, who only echoed the clamours of the people, or public edicts against them. Pliny, a philosopher as well as a judge, in both capacities, examined them more minutely. *The second century* was not wanting in such judges and philosophers; and in that century, Christians, though new and oppressed, made considerable progress. The same circumstances contributed in one view to facilitate, and in another to obstruct that progress. If the subjection of almost all the civilized world to the Roman empire, facilitated the travels of missionaries to distant parts, it also  
often

often deprived them of Roman protection. The books of the New Testament were written in Greek, which in Palestine and Syria was almost as well understood as Syriac, and at Rome as Latin. The Jews had colonies and synagogues every where, which gave missionaries access to them; nay even to half proselytes, and to idolatrous Heathens. But, what paved the way for their introduction, could not prevent opposition from different sentiments, manners and worship. This was gradually overcome by Divine aid, joined to the virtues of the primitive Christians, their persuasive arguments, and especially the miracles wrought for confirming their religion. Though the report of any thing extraordinary instantly strikes the common people, it is otherwise with the learned and philosophic. Even the Jews in Judea were divided about Christianity. No wonder then that those in distant parts were not agreed, whether to rest in the judgment of the Sanhedrim, or to credit witnesses of much inferior rank; and that Heathen nations, remote from the scene of action, and philosophers, whose favourite opinions were very opposite to the new religion, should think variously. This weakens the objection against the Gospel, from its being every where opposed; from philosophers embracing it slowly, and even those of them not unfavourable to it, knowing it, and receiving it imperfectly. A considerable time often elapses, ere those remote from the scene of events fully credit them, and deduce from them the proper consequences. Often, aversion to consequences, prolongs doubts as to the facts and reasonings from whence they are deduced. These general reflections account  
for

for the conduct of philosophers, with respect to Christianity. Those of Asia Minor, of Syria, and of Egypt, being nearest Judea, would have the earliest informations of facts transacted there, the successors of Alexander having introduced among them the Greek, without destroying the Syriac or Coptic. The philosophers of these countries, named Gnostics, ordinarily wrote in Greek, and mingled the system of Zoroaster with those of Pythagoras and Plato. Their chief school was at Alexandria. They were however divided into many branches. Some assumed the names of particular leaders. Others, pluming themselves on the impartial search of truth, wherever they could find it, called themselves Eclectics. When the report of Jesus reached them, they all regarded him as an extraordinary person. They could not question the miracles, which the Jews, though divided as to their causes, denied not. Less prejudiced than the Sanhedrim, far from ascribing these miracles to the devil, they acknowledged in them the marks of a Divine Ambassador; whom, according to their philosophy, they considered as one of the chief Æons or Angels, who had assumed a human form, to re-establish the authority of the true God. They admitted a great part of the history of Jesus, and flattered themselves, that their professed regard to him, would give them access to the numerous and daily increasing societies of his followers, and that then they would easily direct and rule them, their talents being so superior to those of the uncultivated Galileans. To gain this end, they pretended to have learned, from more intimate confidants of Jesus, secrets which his apostles had not known or taught. Im-

† P

perfect



perfect information of the doctrines and precepts of Jesus, exposed many to be thus misled. Facts may be credited, while the scheme of religion which they confirm, is bent from its native purity, by the opinions and manners in which men were educated, or by the philosophic speculations which they afterwards adopt. This is every day done by the half-learned, whose subtlety and acuteness is not tempered by humility.—Probably, these Gnostics of the second century forged the verses of Orpheus, and the Sibylline oracles, to give credit to their mangled Christianity. Orpheus and Linus had taught a purer theism; and their authority might have weight with many Idolaters. By imitating the ancient Sibylline verses, of which Virgil had availed himself in his 4th Eclogue, they endeavoured to gain proselytes. Thus, Manes in the third century, who viewed matter as impure, and slighted the Old Testament as gross and carnal, joined Christianity to the theology of Zoroaster.

C. 40. Plutarch was descended from a family of rank at Cheronea in Bœotia, and hence must have known much of the Christians; Athens and Corinth, where they were so numerous, not being far distant from Cheronea. So curious a traveller must have learned still more about them, at Thessalonica in Greece, Alexandria in Egypt, and especially at Rome. When he returned to Greece, he could not be ignorant of Adrian's answer to Quadratus and Aristides, philosophers of Athens, when they presented that Emperor their apologies for Christianity. In his time, their taking no part with the Jews in their revolt from the Romans, was well known, and they ceased to be considered

as a Jewish sect. Plutarch's moral and miscellany works, gave him frequent opportunities of mentioning them; and yet, when he reflects on the Jews in his book on Superstition, and his Banquet of the Seven Wise Men, of Christians he says nothing. When Judea was conquered, the free exercise of the Jewish religion was granted, not only there, but in all parts of the Roman empire, where they were scattered. Hence, their synagogues retained their privileges, even after the conquests of Titus and Adrian. But Christians, of whom more had been converted from Idolatry than from Judaism, from the beginning only enjoyed a precarious indulgence, not a legal toleration; which gave the Jews frequent pretexts for accusing them before the Roman tribunals. The Roman Senate, zealous for maintaining the majesty of the gods of the Capitol, were alarmed at their increase in every province, notwithstanding Domitian's laws, and the rigour with which they were sometimes executed. Plutarch's silence might have been accounted for by his indifference to religion, and contempt of superstition, had he imbibed the Epicurean system. But his writings discover a just abhorrence of that loose philosophy, and his belief of a Supreme God, Providence, the obligations of virtue, and a future state. Perhaps, like other philosophic Theists, he might not scruple external acts of idolatry, from complaisance to the established religion, and for avoiding the imputation of Atheism; an imputation avoided by the Epicureans, who deemed the hypocrisy of officiating as priests no crime.

C. 41. Paganism consisted in rites and ceremonies, founded on fables, which ignorance cre-

dited, custom established, and the magistrate maintained by his example and authority ; regardless, in the mean time, what were mens speculative opinions, as to religion and the gods. Their maxim was, Do as others do, and believe as you please. No devout sentiment of heart, no repentance or reformation was prescribed by their religion. When they had in public offered sacrifices, their laughing at them in private gave no offence. The magistrates of Rome were therefore sufficiently qualified to act as priests and augurs, to preside in a worship, where only sacrifices and festivals, not moral or religious instruction, were expected. The Senate naturally reserved to themselves the regulating the rites of worship. Hence the laws under Domitian against the Christians. The Senate abridged not the freedom of worship originally granted to the Jews ; for they were not apprehensive, that many would become profelytes to their peculiar rites. But they were alarmed, lest the Christian sect, which was daily gaining over multitudes in all countries, and of every rank, should one day destroy the gods of the Capitol, on whose safety they fancied that of the Empire depended. No legal concession bound them to tolerate Christianity. The Jews had banished those who professed it from their synagogues. The Senate, therefore, thought themselves entitled to forbid this new unauthorized religion. Though their judges did not, like inquisitors, endeavour to discover who were Christians, death was the portion of the accused, unless by some act of idolatry they renounced the Gospel. They considered worship as a mere outward ceremony, to be determined by the authority of the magistrate, not by enquiry

enquiry and conscience. Emperors, who found that violent methods of rooting out Christianity did not succeed, and were like to depopulate whole provinces; as they could not abolish the decrees of the Senate, blunted their force, and made few examples of severity. The calm, however, which motives of policy or of humanity procured, was seldom general, and often disturbed by returns of rigour. Legendary writers undoubtedly multiplied the number of martyrs; almost every church, however inconsiderable, boasting the honour of being founded by a martyr, or of preserving his relics. True histories were exaggerated by fable. Maximinus put to death Mauritius the tribune, and other officers of the Theban legion, for refusing to join in an idolatrous sacrifice: though there is no reason to believe that the whole legion was put to the sword. After allowance is made for false or uncertain accounts, the number of well-attested martyrdoms in the three first centuries remains considerable. These methods of violence formed men to hypocrisy and dissimulation, and, by treachery to God, trained them up to betray their fellow men. Public welfare was not advanced by the exchange of a religion, whose doctrines and precepts encouraged every virtue, for the worship of gods, who, instead of prohibiting, were examples of vice. Much as Trajan's gentle execution of the penal laws has been praised, his severity was unjust, cruel, and contrary to sound policy; deprived the state of the honest, the conscientious and brave; and preserved the cowardly, the interested and hypocritical. This was the more inexcusable, as Christians were peaceable subjects, and, notwithstanding their harsh



usage, were obedient to rulers, and sought not ease by tumult and rebellion. They engaged not in civil wars between competitors for the imperial dignity; though they declined not bearing arms against the common enemies of the state. I doubt not, that the philosophic Plutarch disapproved these penal laws, and trials and executions; though he might think it wise and cautious, not to express his disapprobation. He must have known how the Christians were treated. Had he thought that treatment wise and just, he could have no reason for not saying so.

C. 42. Plutarch, in his book on the cause of the ceasing of oracles in Bœotia, his own country, introduces different unsatisfactory accounts, without giving his own opinion. Fear of offending might prevent his hinting a more probable solution, viz. That the progress of Christianity had occasioned the abandoning the temples of the gods, and thus silenced their oracles: as, in modern times, the progress of true chemistry has banished the dreams of the philosophers stone.— Some may enquire, Why did the first apologists allow, that the Heathen oracles were inspired by some god or demon, and not rather, with the Epicureans, ascribe them to human fraud? I reply, Christians had not power to detect and prove these frauds; and expressing apprehensions of them would only irritate. Besides, their doctrine admitted the operation of demons, good and bad.

C. 43. Christianity being sufficiently confirmed by miracles; in the second century learned men were raised up, to translate the New Testament into Latin and Syriac, to write apologies for Christianity, and to seal their doctrine with  
their



their blood. Such were Ignatius, Quadratus, Aristides, Hegesippus, Tatian, Theophilus, Hermias, Athenagoras, Pothinus, Irenæus, Pantæus. Pastors of churches were in greater danger than the writers of apologies. These being private addresses to an Emperor or a judge, gave no more offence, than pleadings in a law process now do.

C. 44. contains a particular account of the rational arguments by which Justin, in the 2d century, was moved to embrace Christianity; of his able writings against Heathens and Jews, of his two apologies to Antoninus Pius, and of his martyrdom occasioned by the second..

C. 45. Though the Church was persecuted under Trajan, Adrian, Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius, she was not persecuted by them. They were not absolute monarchs. Their power resulted not merely from the imperial dignity, but from other offices, as Consul, Tribune, Pontifex Maximus, &c. often joined with it; and was less in Italy, and in the old provinces which remained under the direction of the Senate, than in the new provinces, which the Emperors governed. The Senate still preserved the right of issuing decrees, and especially of regulating what related to religion; and the wisest emperors dreaded to encroach on a right of which they were so jealous; especially as the imperial dignity was not hereditary, as the deification of dead princes depended on the Senate, and as they could depose a bad prince, and had even sentenced Nero to death. After the death of Domitian, they chose Nerva as his successor; and the method of adoption, which continued almost all the 2d century, with their consent, furnished a longer series, than ever heretofore.

heretofore, of good emperors. These princes, therefore, only considering themselves as guardians of the law, not as lawgivers, especially in religious matters, would not violate the gratitude and respect they owed the Senate, by abrogating standing laws against the Christians, though their advice and influence often abated the rigour, with which they would otherwise have been executed. In mixed constitutions, the greatest monarchs, and wisest ministers of state, often yield to abuses, which they by no means approve. The troubles of the third century sometimes increased, sometimes diminished the imperial power. Though under Constantine the empire became Christian, it is remarkable, that till the reign of Theodosius, a great part of the Senate retained the old religion. It is not easy to determine what sentiments of Christianity the philosophic Emperors entertained. The passage of Marcus Aurelius. l. xi. § 3. expresses no general contempt of the Christian martyrs, though it blames those who needlessly rushed upon, and exposed themselves to death.— It is natural to enquire, Did no Heathen philosophers attempt, in the 2d century, to confute Christianity? Every thing invited them to the task, if they could have undertaken it with success. They had the support of law and government, and lived so near the time of the miracles said to have been wrought for confirming it, that had there been any imposture, they might easily have detected it. Lucian speaks of the Christians in two passages of his genuine works, viz. his account of the impostor Alexander, and of the death of Peregrinus. But he says nothing which does them dishonour. As for the Philopatris, it  
was

was a work of a much later date, probably of the Sophist Lucian, in the Emperor Julian's reign. —Difficultly, as in most cases, truth gets the better of custom and prejudice: a hundred cities of the Roman empire had now their churches, pastors, writers, martyrs. Paganism defended itself by penal laws; Christianity by argument.—Celsus was the only philosopher who took up the pen against Christianity in the second century. Of him I shall speak, when I take notice of the reply to him by Origen.

C. 46. The third century commenced under the government of the wise and brave Severus Septimius. Spartian tells us, c. 16. that, when in Egypt, he discovered great devotion to Serapis, and prohibited, under several penalties, men becoming Jews or Christians. This, though it hindered making new profelytes to these religions, may be interpreted as a liberty for those already of these religions to profess them. Probably many processions arose from this edict: for at that time, a multitude of Christians were put to death, in Egypt, Africa, and Gaul. This occasioned Tertullian's noble apology, in which Christianity is well vindicated from the unjust aspersions cast upon it. Among other things, he observes, that if the loyalty of Christians was not secured by principles of conscience, they wanted not strength to ward off persecution, as there were multitudes of them in their cities, in their armies, even in the Senaté, and every where, except in the temples. Indeed, his boast of their loyalty was just; for in that age of wars and factions, they took no part, though doubtless an opposite conduct would have strengthened their interest. Perhaps

haps this apology had little effect. The Church, however, through the good instructions and example of her pastors, and the patience of those who suffered for the faith, still increased: and as Tertullian observes, the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. Her edification was also much promoted by a number of learned writers, as Dionysius bishop of Alexandria, Julius Africanus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and his successor Origen. The last, in refuting Celsus's objections, has fully preserved them. Modern Infidels have borrowed many of them. Only, they do not, with him, and the Jews of that age, own the miracles of Jesus, and ascribe them to magic. In a period so distant from these facts, it is easy and convenient to deny them, which was not so when the memory of them was fresh. Minucius Fælix, without presenting an apology to magistrates, or refuting any particular Jew or Heathen, has, in a fine dialogue, given a general answer to the most popular accusations of the Christians. Thus, by writings of different tastes, Heathens became ashamed of accusing Christians as Atheists, incestuous, or eaters of human flesh: and perceiving the little effect of violence, they called fraud to her aid. For destroying the force of miracles, whose truth they could not deny, fabulous accounts of Apollonius Tyanaeus's miracles in confirmation of Paganism, were published by Philostratus. Hierocles, about the end of the century, attempted again to introduce these phantoms. But on Eusebius's reply to him, they utterly disappeared: and now some Heathens began to speak respectfully of Christ, and would gladly have compounded matters with his followers, and admitted him

him among their gods. Alexander Severus not only tolerated the new religion, but privately worshipped Apollonius, Christ, Abraham and Orpheus. He even proposed raising a temple to Christ, and admitting him among the gods. But the Pontiffs and College of Quindecimvirs dissuaded him from that measure; urging, that if it was adopted, all men would become Christians, and forsake the other temples. See Lampridius, c. 22, 29, 43. Because Alexander loved the Christians, they were hated and persecuted by Maximian his murderer and successor. Though they also suffered much under Decius and Valerian; yet in general, through that century, they enjoyed a longer calm than heretofore. About the middle of it, there were 44 priests and 7 deacons in the church at Rome; and, on account of the number of Christians, their places of worship were often large, though not ornamented. Every great city had its bishop, who was respected even by the Heathen magistrates, and sometimes a metropolitan could assemble 60 or 80 bishops to deliberate in a synod on ecclesiastic matters. Eusebius, however, who gives these details, l. 8. c. 1. acknowledges, that prosperity introduced envy, ambition, avarice, fondness for curious speculations, &c. These corruptions lessened the firmness of many in succeeding persecutions, and occasioned warm debates, as to admitting again into communion, those who had denied Christ. About the end of this century, Arnobius wrote his book *contra Gentes*. Christians were now so well known, that the old calumnies against them were no longer credited. But, the calamities of the times were ascribed to their offending the tutelar  
 gods



gods of the Roman empire, to which Arnobius then, as Augustine afterwards, more largely replied.

C. 47. Towards the end of the 3d century, and till the tenth year of the fourth, the number of Christians and Heathens might be nearly balanced. But the power was almost wholly on the side of the last. Galerius, A. D. 303, obtained the edict of Nicomedia from Dioclesian for renewing severities against the Christians. In the provinces under Constantius, their treatment was more moderate. Hierocles, as I formerly observed, was employed to revive the credit of Apollonius Tyanæus. Porphyry, a satirical enemy of Christianity, and a subtle apologist for Paganism, by allegorizing Hesiod's theogony, endeavoured to blunt the edge of the ridicule cast on it by Christians. The Church was defended by the patience of her martyrs, and by the ability of her apologists, and other writers; of whom Eusebius of Cæsarea and Lactantius, were among the most distinguished. God was now providing in young Constantine a deliverer of the Church from her fiery trials. The affront done him, when Dioclesian and Maximian abdicated the government, makes it probable that Galerius had bad designs in not sending him to his father; but by his secretly escaping, and joining his father, they were disappointed. Constantius, who died at York, A. D. 305, in his testament as first Augustus, made him Cæsar. The army immediately proclaimed him Augustus; but he assumed not the title, till some time after, when Galerius confirmed it. Constantinus, who had been well educated, possessed many of the qualities necessary for forming a great prince. His figure, his looks, his fortitude, recommended

commended him to the army. He contracted none of the vices of a dissipated court, where he had ten years resided, except a little of Dioclesian's passion for external ornaments. He discovered the same virtues and capacity for administering civil affairs, which distinguished his father. He generally gave orders, and wrote dispatches himself. His spirit was active, firm and steady. Temperate and sober, generous and liberal, naturally kind and affable; then only, when constrained, he was severe. Fond of the arts and sciences, he had carefully studied philosophy, history and law, and could speak and write equally well in Greek and Latin. Faults he undoubtedly had, some of which his Christianity, though sincere, did not correct. But, he had virtues which would have been admired in the best days of the Roman republic, and a piety which fitted him for the great work, of which Providence made him the instrument.

C. 48. Constantine considered the appearance of a luminous cross, and the dream which explained it, as particular encouragements to him to undertake the deliverance of the Church, not as proofs of Christianity. The evidences of this appearance are stated, and the objections against it thoroughly answered, in Abbe Du Voisin's *Dissertation Critique sur la vision de Constantin*. Par. 1774.

C. 49. Rome received the conqueror of Maximentius as her deliverer; and Heathens, prejudiced as they were at his change of religion, admired his character. While at Rome, he contented himself with performing his family devotions in a chapel in his palace; and in that city Christians

stians only enjoyed liberty and protection, as in the rest of his dominions. Soon after he had an interview with Licinius at Milan. There they passed an edict, allowing Christians the public exercise of their worship, which, at their request, Maximin also did, though, on breaking with Licinius, he renewed his former persecutions. The conquest and death of Maximin was the full abolition of the edict of Nicomedia. Licinius, whose connexions with Constantine were not durable, returned to his bad treatment of the Christians. This occasioned a war, which ended in his abdication and death, A. D. 324. Constantine then found himself able to execute his grand designs for the civil and religious interest of the empire.

C. 50. In an edict soon after Constantine went to the East, though he invited Heathens to embrace the religion of Jesus, he left them full liberty of conscience, and prohibited all constraint. If some Heathen temples were shut up and destroyed during his reign, this was the effect of popular tumults, and of the discovery of fraud and debaucheries carried on in these temples. Yet, the temple of Serapis in Alexandria, though suspected of such abuses, remained till Theodosius. Sacrifices continued at Rome and other places, where idolatry prevailed; and therefore, his prohibition of them only regarded those, who, in the camp, used to offer solemn sacrifices in name of the prince, and for his prosperity. Allowing this, would have been contrary to his religion; and such of his officers as were Christians, could not conscientiously practise these ceremonies. The prayer on some solemn days address-  
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ed in the army to the Supreme God, was conceived in terms which Heathens could use.—We may judge what progress Christianity had made, notwithstanding the edict of Nicomedia, by 318 bishops being present at the council of Nice, though few of the Latin bishops came there. The design of the Emperor was, to establish uniformity, as far as possible, not only in doctrine, but in discipline and worship.—If Constantine was blame-worthy in building too magnificent churches, and introducing too much pomp into worship ; he merits praise, for not admitting paintings or statues into churches, and for providing many of them with entire copies of the Old and New Testament. It is a just complaint, that, after the empire became Christian, the clergy were too much aggrandized and enriched.—This, however, though often laid to the charge of Constantine, was not his fault, but that of weaker princes long after him. He did well, in providing a competent support for learned and pious teachers of religion ; for he was sensible how much religion would suffer by the ignorance and contempt of the clergy. That nothing might divert them from the offices of their sacred function, they were exempted, as others of learned professions, from certain burdensome public services : and though he knew the ability of many of the bishops for civil offices, he gave none of them commissions foreign to their proper work. His pious donations will not appear exorbitant, if we reflect, that they were intended for building and repairing places of worship, and relieving the poor and the sick, as well as for supporting the clergy, all which charges were defrayed from the revenue of

each particular church. Edicts and actions were falsely ascribed to Constantine, in the fifth and following centuries, for justifying corruptions lately introduced. Valesius, in his translation of a passage in Eusebius's Life of Constantine, l. 4, c. 71, says, that mass was performed at his funeral; whereas Eusebius only says, there was an assembly for worship on that occasion.

C. 51. In Constantine's treaties of peace with the Goths and Sarmates, allowance was procured for sending missionaries to instruct them: and to this it was owing, that the Church suffered less than the empire by the invasion of these northern nations. He encouraged the King of Armenia, who had formerly become Christian, by admitting him to his alliance. In the end of his reign, he influenced the Christians of Arabia, to plant the gospel in Abyssinia, where it yet subsists and flourishes. His last days were pious and devout, and his death worthy a great man and a sincere Christian.

C. 52. Modern Infidels have attempted, by historical scepticism, to throw a veil over the causes of the Gospel's rapid progress: Nor have their attempts been without success. Through a lightness and frivolity of spirit occasioned by luxury, less attention is paid than in the two preceding centuries to moral and serious subjects, and the suspicions or misrepresentations of superficial writers are listened to with pleasure. It is alleged, that the Church has suppressed whatever writings would be unfavourable to her; as a fraudulent advocate removes out of the way titles and rights which would hurt his cause. But, let it be observed, that the Church never assumed the  
power



power of authoritatively judging the writings of Jews, Heathens, and other foreign enemies, leaving to learned teachers the care of refuting them, which many of them did in the fairest manner, producing their writings fully and in all their force. Thus, Justin, Tertullian and Chrysostome, in their writings against the Jews; and Augustine, *De altercatione ecclesiæ et synagoge*: whence it appears, that the Jews in those early ages had no historical records to oppose to our's, and only urged reasonings which prejudice could have dictated at any time, and which are nearly the same with those of modern Infidels. The impious stories composed by some Jews, about the end of the second or the beginning of the third century, under the title of *Sepher Toledoth Giesu*, are not cited by Jews themselves as authentic records. Even these malicious romances contain acknowledgments of many important facts. So far were Christians from dreading the publication of these stories, which the Jews from fear or from shame concealed, that Rabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mentz, having got some knowledge of them, imparted it to others in his treatise against the Jews. Wagenfeilius, in the last century, was the first who published them, as Huldric has since done, with good remarks. The same Wagenfeilius was not afraid to publish a still abler Jewish treatise against Christianity, intitled *Nitzaeon*. Orbio the Jew, in his conference with Limborch, complains not that the Christians had suppressed or destroyed ancient records.—— There is as little evidence, that the Christians suppressed the writings of Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian. In an age, when all learning was in MSS.,

only the most useful and entertaining books were often transcribed : Even books of science and history were in few hands, for few were capable of reading. Hence the writings of Thot, Sanchoniatho, Berofus, Thales, Anaxagoras, &c. are lost. Of Greek and Latin writers, not a fourth part of those whose titles may be seen in Fabricius, remain ; and of Carthaginian writers, not one. To churches and monasteries we are chiefly indebted for preserving the greater part of the valuable MSS., the printing of which so happily promoted the revival of learning in the fifteenth century. Can we then be surprized, that when preserving books was so difficult, more pains was employed in copying works of merit, than pernicious or trifling compositions ? They were not mistaken, who thought their time better employed in transmitting to posterity the writings of Polybius, of Livy, or of Tacitus, than those of Celsus and his fellow labourers. Many of the ecclesiastic writers in Jerome's and Dupin's Catalogues are perished. We regret the loss of the Gospel according to the Egyptians, which, though defective, and not authentic, was one of the first records of what was preached in the earliest times. It is unfortunate, that the writings of Basilides, and other learned Gnostics ; the refutation of the Gnostics by Castor Agrippa ; the apologies of Quadratus, Aristides, and Melito ; the history of Hegesippus, and the chronology of Julius Africanus, are lost. It would, however, be unjust to charge the Heathen emperors with destroying them. It is equally so to charge the Christians with destroying writings against their religion. Before the reign of Constantine,

stantine, it was not in their power : and they had no temptation to it, when the empire became Christian. The cause was decided : and curiosity would gladly preserve the pleadings on both sides. Few Christians understood Greek books : and Origen against Celsus shows, that many excellent Greek books were not translated into Latin. There were many Heathen philosophers, even in the sixth century, who could have easily preserved writings against Christianity, now lost, if they had thought it of any consequence. If they are not blamed on that account, Christians are as little blameworthy. In the small libraries of Bishops and Monasteries spared by the Barbarians, most of the ancient books were preserved. When Greek books against Christianity became rare, Latin churchmen could not transcribe them, and Greek ones might think their time more agreeably and usefully spent in copying Plutarch, than Celsus.

C. 53. Porphyry's book against the Christians in the beginning of the 4th century, was not formidable to their cause : for it only contained reasonings, which in any age might have been urged and refuted ; not facts opposite to those on which the Gospel was founded. It was his last composition, and appeared at the time of the edict of Nicomedia. The learned of the Christian communion, beheld with indignation an aged philosopher, who had hitherto been silent about their religion, now in support of persecution, attacking it with bitter arrogance. Though he had the favour of the great, he was soon refuted by Eusebius and Methodius ; and as his book had its admirers even after Constantine, Apollinarius wrote  
against

against it, A. D. 345, and Philostorgius A. D. 425. Unhappily, both his books and the four replies have all perished. From the citations, however, of different authors who read it, collected by Holstenius in his life of Porphyry, it appears, that he intended to unite a philosophic theism, such as that of Pythagoras and Plato, with a popular polytheism; and supposed, that the gods of different countries were good demons, friendly to mankind, and to virtue. He objected, as Manes had done, many things to the Old Testament; and, from the plainness of Daniel's prophecies, as to the kings of Egypt and Syria, inferred, that they were written after the events. Of Jesus he spoke respectfully, as a wise and good man, who had contributed much to destroy the power of evil demons: and probably he would not have objected to Jesus being admitted among the demi-gods. The apostles he blamed, as not having recorded the doctrine of their master with sufficient knowledge and faithfulness; so that, in his opinion, theology was as little restrained as philosophy, by any revelation. I have already remarked, his varnishing over the history of the Heathen gods, by turning it into allegory. As the morals of Christians distinguished them from a licentious Heathens, Porphyry, by the austerity of his life and precepts, endeavoured to deprive them of that honourable distinction. The weak side of his book was, putting off his readers with speculative reasonings and keen railery, instead of examining the truth of the facts which support the Gospel, and producing witnesses for invalidating their evidence; We need not wonder, that an attack, which left the strongest defences of Christianity unshaken, was soon



soon forgotten, and buried in the ruins of that religion, which it had so weakly supported. There would have been more reason to have regreted his book, if it had contained historical researches. There is no ground for alleging, that Constantine suppressed it from false zeal. Julian, Libanius, and Zosimus, zealous Heathens, and bitter enemies of Constantine, wrote in the 4th and 5th centuries. Yet none of them laid this to his charge. No cotemporary Christian writer, indeed no Christian writer during the whole 4th century, gives the least hint of burning Porphyry's book: though Eusebius confuted his work; though Augustine frequently mentions it; and though Athanasius relates Constantine's sentiments of that philosopher. For, complaining of the proceedings of Constantius, he asks, Why did he introduce into the Church the Arians, whom his father had called Porphyrians? Yet that sentence, ill understood, was the occasion of an edict being forged, in the 5th century, under the name of Constantine, commanding Porphyry's books to be burnt, and the Arians to be styled Porphyrians. This pretended edict is inserted by Socrates and Sozomenes, who collected all that fell in their way; but not by the more judicious Theodoret.—These forgeries were designed for exciting the younger Theodosius to rage against the Nestorians, as he was made to believe Constantine had done against the Arians. Towards the middle of that century, 110 years after Constantine, the court of Constantinople, both in political wisdom and religion, was greatly degenerated. The barbarism began, which lasted near nine centuries: And, when it could advance the power of the clergy,



gy, or bear down an alleged heretic; edicts of Emperors, or decrees of councils, were, without scruple, forged or interpolated. If Constantine had caused Porphyry's book be publicly burnt, that would not account for its being lost; unless he had taken the odious step, of searching for copies in the repositories of every Heathen at Rome, and in the provinces; of which, history gives not the slightest hint. Indeed, the forgery of the edict fully appears, by Apollinarius finding it necessary to refute Porphyry, fifteen years after Constantine's death; by Augustine citing and refuting him, about the end of the 4th century, in four different passages of his book *De Civitate Dei*; and from Phlegon writing against him A. D. 423. It was not till sixty years later, that the Justinian code observed, Porphyry's pride had been punished, in his book disappearing. The expression intimates, that it fell into oblivion, not that it was suppressed. I will only add, Christians have as good a right to conjecture as Infidels. The four confutations of Porphyry's book, as well as the book itself, are lost. What if we should allege that the Emperor Julian was anxious to destroy whatever might tarnish the reputation of his favourite philosopher? The truth is, such complaints on either side are unreasonable.—As for Julian's attack on Christianity, it is not lost. Every word of it is preserved in the reply to it, which Cyrill published, sixty years after Julian's death.

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## NUMBER VIII.

F. STOSCH *Demonstratio existentiae Ecclesiae Thyatirenae*, inserted *Symbola literaria Bremenses*, t. 2. part. 1. 1746, No. 5. p. 111—152.

“ **T**HE Alogians disputed the genuineness of  
 “ the Apocalypse, because the church  
 “ of Thyatira was not yet founded: Epiphanius, who allows the fact, extricates himself  
 “ from the difficulty, by ingeniously supposing, that St John wrote in the spirit of prophecy. See Abauzit Discours sur l’Apocalypse.” This is the sneering remark of Mr Gibbons: History, Vol. 1. notes p. 74. The little of argument it contains, was fully canvassed by Dr Stosch, long before the appearance of Mr Gibbons’s elegant history.

The objection of the Alogi against the authenticity of the book of the Revelations, is thus recorded by Epiphanius, hæc. 51. § 33. Εἶπε, γράβειν τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῷ ἐν Θυατείροις, καὶ οὐκ ἐνὶ ἐκείνῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ χριστιανῶν ἐν Θυατείρᾳ. πῶς οὖν ἐγράφη τῇ μὴ οὖσῃ. The Alogi doubtless meant, that there was no church at Thyatira in the time of the apostle John; and that therefore, at that time, no letter could be addressed to them. But Epiphanius, taking advantage of the word *ἐν*, affects to understand them as speaking of their own time, and turns their argument against themselves. There was, says he, a true church at Thyatira; but the Alogi, or other heretics of the same stamp, such as the Phryges or Mantanists, had corrupted and destroyed it, as John had foretold, painting these heretics under  
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the image of Jezabel. But, though thus extinguished 92 years after Christ's ascension, in 112 years, by the favour of God, it again revived. Petavius therefore, Bossuet, and Simon, were mistaken, in representing Epiphanius as acknowledging that there was no church at Thyatira when John wrote; and supposing that John, in a prophetic book, had wrote to a church which he knew would afterwards exist.——It must, however, be granted, that Epiphanius's reply to the Alogi is not sufficient. Probably he imagined the Apocalypse written when Claudius was emperor; in whose time it would be difficult, or impossible, to prove that the church of Thyatira existed.

The early existence of the church at Thyatira appears (1.) from *Acts* xvi. 14, 15. Lydia is the proper name of the woman here mentioned, not the name of her country, for it is not simply said *τις γυνη Λυδια*, but *ονοματι Λυδια*. Her ordinary residence was evidently at Thyatira, not at Philippi; for she is termed a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira. Some, indeed, would interpret this a native of Thyatira. But, surely, when we speak of a merchant of Amsterdam, Leipsic, or Francfort, we mean one who resides in these cities, whether a native of them or not. It is no objection to this, that she received Paul and his companions into her house at Philippi. Nothing is more usual, than for merchants attending fairs, to hire houses for receiving and vending their wares. Her title, *a seller of purple*, makes it probable, that she was a merchant, who had carried her wares from the place where they were manufactured, to a better market. We have instances of this, *Jf.* xxiii. 3. *Ezek.* xxvii.

xxvii. 12. Nor were fairs continuing many days, and to which strangers resorted, unknown among the ancients. See Justin, Hist. xiii. 5. Tacit. hist. iii. 30. Terent. Adelph. act. 2. sc. 1. It is not therefore to be doubted, that Lydia some time after returned to Thyatira with her family, she and they having been baptized. Nor is it improbable, that the church in her house, by their instructions and example, might bring others to the faith of the Gospel. I have no doubt, that this was Epiphanius's opinion as to the planting of the church of Thyatira: for he imagined the Apocalypse written under the emperor Claudius, about the middle of whose reign Lydia's conversion happened. (2.) Paul informs us, *Rom.* xv. 19, that from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum, he had fully preached the gospel of Christ. Though this will not prove that he visited every little town and village in that tract, we cannot suppose that he would neglect so flourishing a city as Thyatira then was, especially as, in travelling through Mysia and Lydia, he was so near it; and the confirming Lydia's family in the faith, would be no small inducement to him. Add to this, that he tells us, *1 Cor.* xvi. 9. that at Ephesus, which was not far from Thyatira, a great door was opened to him; and that he says, *Rom.* xvi. 23. that there was no more room for him in the regions between Jerusalem and Illyricum; which he would not have said, if the Gospel had not been preached with success in so considerable a city as Thyatira. I determine not, whether it was preached there by Paul, by some evangelist sent hither, or by inhabitants of Thyatira who heard Paul at Ephesus.

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during the two years he taught in that city, when, as we are told, *Acts* xix. 10. all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. (3.) Paul glories, *Rom.* xv. 20, 21. that he had strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest he should build upon another man's foundation. If, therefore, he came to Thyatira, it was, there to plant a church: If he came not, it was, because others had laid the foundation, and a church was already planted. (4.) All this is confirmed by the situation of Thyatira, surrounded by Pergamus, Sardis, Philadelphia, and other places, where churches were founded by John or Paul. (5.) Tertullian says, l. De Pœnitentia, p. 441. Evolve, quid spiritus ecclesiis dicat? desertam dilectionem Ephesis imputat. Stuprum et idolorum esum Thyatirenis exprobat. And, l. iv. adv. Marcion, p. 223. Habemus et Joannis alumnas ecclesias. Nam etsi Apocalypsin ejus Marcion respuat, ordo tamen episcoporum ad originem recens, in Joannem itabit auctorem. If the regular succession of Asian bishops from John to the time of Tertullian was known, there was in John's days a bishop in Thyatira. These records were either unknown to Epiphanius, or lost when he wrote. (6.) The Alogi, who appeared in the 2d or 3d century, deserve not equal credit as Tertullian, who wrote more early. Ancients doubters of the Apocalypse objected not against its authenticity, the epistle to Thyatira; which they would have done, had not its existence been certain. (7.) Eusebius, who doubted the authenticity of the Apocalypse, never mentions this objection: whence we may presume, that he knew its falsehood and weakness.



weakness. (8.) An impostor would not have exposed himself to shame and ridicule, by an epistle to a church which had no existence. If he was fond of the number seven, Colosse or Hieropolis would have occurred.

Dr Stofsch, in his *Antiquitates Thyatirenorum*, Zwoll. 1763, l. 2. c. 1. illustrates more largely the preceding arguments, and adds to them the following: (1.) Origen. hom. 3. in Cont. t. 7. Operum Hieronymi, p. 108. Sed et in Apocalypsi Joannis, Angelo Thyatirensi testimonium dat, pro charitate, quam ordinavit Angelus ipse in ecclesia sibi commissa. To Tertullian and Origen I might add all who mention the seven churches of Asia, and ascribe the care and government of them to the apostle John; for whom, Hammond diss. 4. de jur. Ep. c. 8. § 8, 9. and Lampe Prol. ad Evang. Joan. c. 4. § 1. may be consulted. (2.) Many of the ancients imagined, as Grotius observes on *Rev. ii. 20.* that Jezabel was the wife of the bishop of Thyatira. (3.) Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian, were much addicted to allegorical interpretations of Scripture. If the existence of the church of Thyatira had appeared to them uncertain, would they not have called the help of allegory to account for John's writing an epistle to that church? If the Alogi could not have been confuted by certain and undoubted tradition, mystic interpretation would have been employed to invalidate their reasonings:— Probably the Alogi were led to their objection against the Apocalypse, by the black picture drawn of the heretics from whom they derived their errors, in the epistle to the church at Thyatira. The orthodox applied to them the threat-

enings against Jezabel; and the easiest way of getting rid of the charge was, the denying that there was any church at Thyatira when John lived.

## N U M B E R IX.

*Hints of Facts relating to religion, Manners, and the Improvement of Mankind, from DR SEILER of Erlangen's German Literary Journals, 1776—1788.*

**A**S these journals have been published for above 16 years, the yearly price of them is considerable, and few here understand the German; it is hoped, the following historical extracts will afford curious and useful information to many, who have no occasion for a large review of German publications.

1776.

In many places of Protestant Germany, the better education of children, has become an object of general attention.—Rosewitz, Abbot of Kloster Bergen, published, 1775, laws for that seminary, annexing punishments to different faults, *e. g.* exclusion from the ordinary hours of amusement; confinement to one's chamber; imprisonment; feeding on bread and water; publicly asking pardon of a person injured; being deprived for a time of the assistance of a servant, whom one had insulted or struck. By such laws, good schoolmasters will be preserved from much unmerited reproach, and the tyranny of bad ones bridled.—The Duke of Wirtemberg erected an academy

cademy at Studtgardt, 1771, where more than 300 youth of different ages, ranks and capacities, are trained up in the knowledge and practice of religion, and for usefulness in various stations of life. Not content with furnishing the greatest part of the expence of this institution, the Duke often visits it, and attends to the progress which the youth make, under the able instructors provided for them.—The consistory at Bayreuth has enjoined, that schools be visited weekly; and, that the inspectors of dioceses send them their proposals, for the better regulating education, and providing for teachers.—The Prince of Anspach has commanded his clergy to have monthly conferences, in presence of candidates, on the right discharge of their office, and other theological matters. The clergy of Ottingen have, of their own accord, resolved on such meetings; and their consistory has introduced considerable improvements, in the manner of teaching both Latin and German.—Lofius, superintendant at Burgdorf in Zell, published, 1775, an account of the manner in which he taught a girl of 9 years of age, born deaf and dumb, to converse by writing, and to understand the most important truths of natural and revealed religion.—Dr Seiler proposes, that, where there is no academy for training up-able schoolmasters, the inspector of every diocese should fix a place, where the minister and schoolmaster shall employ some time for that purpose. The first should instruct candidates in the doctrines and duties of religion, and the best manner of communicating the knowledge of them, and recommending to youth piety and good manners. The second should point out the easiest method

of teaching to read. These places should be furnished with the best school books, and treatises on education, for the common benefit of instructors and candidates. Candidates should be employed in teaching and examining, and their faults hinted. A distinct account should be kept of their abilities, diligence and good behaviour, that the inspector may be enabled to give them testimonials, according to their respective merit. A method of teaching should be composed for the study of candidates, and directing schoolmasters, as far as circumstances permit. By collections at church doors, from new scholars, and even from public houses and places of amusement, money might be raised, for defraying these expences, for maintaining poor candidates, and better encouraging schoolmasters. Or, every person above 20 years of age, not supported by charity, might contribute a little for these purposes.—Dr Seiler afterwards published, in his journal 1776, an essay on the importance of ministers frequently visiting schools, and informing themselves of the ability, diligence and good behaviour, both of teachers and scholars.—Hermes, inspector at Jerichau in Mecklenburg, having, by some Socinian tenets in a weekly paper, offended the consistory, the Duke dispensed with his personal appearance before them, and gave a private commission to Fiedler and Doderlein, to enquire into the matter. Hermes, not relishing their proceedings, ended the enquiry, by accepting a call to be Provost at Breslau.

Several Roman Catholics have adopted a better plan of instruction. Tongel, director of the school at Inspruch in Tyrol, published, 1775, a sensible

sensible treatise on the best method of catechizing. Perhaps no other Popish book is so proper a text for prelections on that subject.—Dr H. Braun of Munich, published, 1766, plans of sermons for all the Sabbaths and festivals of the year. It is honourable for him to have composed, and for many of his superiors to have recommended a book, where such regard is paid to the sacred oracles, and many practical instructions given, which Protestants may read with profit.—On occasion of the jubilee 1775, the prince and archbishop of Saltzburg published a pastoral letter, against trusting in indulgences without repentance and reformation. In another pastoral letter, 1776, he recommends to his clergy, an unwearied study of the sacred oracles, better acquaintance with the fathers and church history; distinguishing the word of God from human reasonings and additions, and, what is essential in religion, from the systems of the learned, and from ceremonies and rules of discipline subject to change; not making a gain of godliness, or inculcating dreams and conceits as necessary truths. He argues the falsehood of the exorcisms of Gasner, &c.: and observes, that miracles, necessary when the gospel was first preached, are not so now; and that men, ignorant of Nature, often fancy her operations miraculous.—The archbishop of Prague, in a letter to the clergy of his diocese, with great zeal and strength of argument, warns them against countenancing and imitating Gasner and others, who pretended to cure by exorcisms the falling sickness, gout, and other diseases, which they ascribed to diabolical possession. It is surprising, how artfully these fanatics



tics have preserved their credit with many Roman Catholics. When they fail in their cures, they plead, that the disease flowed from natural causes: When a patient relapses, they allege, that by his committing some new sin, Satan has regained the possession of him. Semler at Hall, in a collection of letters and essays on the exorcisms, 2 volumes 8vo, 1775, ascribes any real cures performed by Gafner to magnetism, electricity, or the force of imagination. Schropfer's pretensions of obliging both good and bad spirits to appear, he supposes were supported by something resembling the magic lantern. His imposture the Doctor argues, from his choosing pits as the scenes of his operations, intoxicating the spectators with punch, endeavouring to strike them with terror; and of people of rank, admitting only the young and unexperienced, not adepts in philosophy and the history of nature.

1777.

The Duke of Saxe Meiningen, after employing E. J. Walch to visit several celebrated schools, has erected a seminary where eight well-recommended candidates, are trained up for teaching religion and other things necessary in village schools. That they may have an opportunity of reducing their instructions to practice, the Duke has at the same time founded a school, where they are employed under the direction of the catechist in teaching twelve poor children.--Bafedow, since 1768, has employed much diligence for reforming the public schools. The first attempt to carry his schemes into execution, was the Philanthropist school at Dessau, under his own care, 1775. He proposed a form of worship  
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which should offend neither Protestant nor Papist, and instructing every one in the religion of his fathers. None should be constrained to attention, or to commit things to memory. All should be taught by way of sport, or by striking representations, which would delight and entertain: Languages should be taught by speaking and reading, without grammar. For preserving health of body and cheerfulness of mind, as much time should be spent in riding, balls, and other amusements, as at meals. Ulysses van Solis erected another Philanthropin at Marschlin, under the care of Bahrtdt, which even disputes the precedence with that at Dessau, and where more respect is paid to Christianity. Bahrtdt erected a third at Hildesheim, 1777, where only those intended for the learned professions are taught Latin. The teachers in these schools are very properly bound to follow a certain plan, alterable however as experience may point out; to keep journals, and impart to one another their observations; to treat their scholars with friendship, and to reward their good behaviour; to make instruction easy by maps, pictures and models, and never to punish without common advice. But there are many just exceptions to their plan. Their scholars are only educated as men, not as citizens of our world. Accustomed to do only what pleases them, and no longer than it pleases them; they become unfit for laborious employments, and dry studies, however necessary for the public good. Many of their methods of instructions are ludicrous; many things unnecessary are taught. Plans are proposed which cannot be executed, and improper punishments are often inflicted. The  
learned

learned languages are taught, not from the improving writings of the Classics, but by childish plays, which neither enlighten the understanding, nor form the heart. Though Basedow disclaims meddling with particular religious opinions, his zeal for Socinianism has often betrayed him to insinuate prejudices against the Lutheran doctrines in his elementary books, and to expose to contempt every peculiar article of revelation. Lutherans, Calvinists, Papists and Jews, might study and live in peace at these, as they do at other seminaries, without the absurd attempt of uniting their religions, or of making them indifferent to the peculiarities of them all. It is no wonder that Basedow's chimerical schemes, and the sums requisite for executing them, at last brought him and his assistants almost to despair of success: when the Prince of Dessau took the institution under his own protection, and appointed Mr Campe curator; Basedow giving up to him the superintendency, and only assisting him with his advice. The plan is now less extensive in its object. Some defects are amended; and the scholars, two years before they go to the world, are instructed in morals, decency and good behaviour. —The consistory at Hanover has enjoined public catechizing once a year on select passages of Scripture.—Arnoldi, a minister at Gießen, has published instructions for teaching the deaf and dumb to read and write: It is difficult to determine, whether the inventive genius or disinterested generosity of the author, is most conspicuous, in what he here freely imparts to the public. —Prince Ludwig Frederic at Schwartzburg in Rudelstadt, often observing some little girls asking  
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alms at his windows, touched with compassion, sent some of them to be maintained, and instructed in knitting stockings by a woman of good character; other teachers attending at certain hours, and instructing them in reading, writing, and the principles of Christianity. This generosity was concealed from his father till his birth-day, when the young Prince presented them. If they behave well in the school for three years, part of what they have earned by their labour is laid up for them as their property. Part of their earnings, with an additional sum, is laid out on interest, for such as have been in service six years, and at least two of them in one family, and have behaved well. The example of this truly benevolent and excellent Prince, has produced at Rudelstadt a subscription for another institution of the same nature. A seminary is also erected there for schoolmasters and preachers.—At Nassau Weilburg, the Lutherans and Reformed, are so intermingled, that in the country there is one school for the children of both religions. All have the same books taught them, for reading, writing, and arithmetic: But, the catechisms of the different churches remain as before.—By the influence of President Maser, the inspectors in Hesse Darmstadt have been enjoined, to enquire into the good behaviour and diligence in their office of ministers and schoolmasters, and to suffer none to serve by deputies, except in cases of extreme necessity. When students of divinity come to reside in a diocese, they are required to acquaint the inspector, and lay their testimonials before the consistory, that their merit, diligence in studies, and fitness for preaching, may be watch-  
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ed over : For the last purpose, candidates for the ministry deliver a discourse every half year before the inspector, which he transmits to the consistory.——In a charity school for girls, erected at Zurich, 1774, they are not only taught themselves, but instructed how to relate Scripture history, and to instil the knowledge of religion into young children.

A translation has been published at Bamberg, in twelve parts, of meditations by a French Catholic, on the harmony of the gospels for all the days of the year. It abounds with evangelical sentiments on redemption through free grace, and on the merits of Jesus appropriated to us by faith.—A society meet weekly by authority at Warsaw, to inspect all plans of elementary books sent them. Through their care, different works of this kind, well composed, may be expected.—Koltner, a Franciscan, has published at Vienna a sermon on the festival of the holy name of Jesus, composed with taste, elegance, and insight into the nature of true religion. He shows that the genius of Christianity is peaceable, and friendly to the power of princes ; that the time should not be spent in prayer, which the education of our children, or labouring for the maintenance of those who depend upon us, requires ; that churches should not be places of refuge for the profligate ; that the temporal authority of the clergy is from the indulgence of princes, not from God ; that saints are to be honoured as intercessors, not as the great God, or alone Mediator ; that though images are useful memorials of saints and sacred mysteries, the same power is not to be ascribed to them as to God, or even as to the intercession of saints ;  
that



that God approves not pilgrimages, which occasion men's neglecting the duties of their callings and relations in life; that church usages must not be preferred to what is essential in religion; that men may perish, who join a religious order, and daily perform holy rites; that piety should not be sullied with superstition, &c. It is said, Koltner's honest zeal has been rewarded with the loss of his office as teacher of ecclesiastic law, and with persecution.—Counsellor Braun has published at Munich, a plan for managing the religious academy at Ingolstadt, which those of every communion may read with profit. He adopts many of the best late proposals for bettering schools. He approves the teaching by dialogues, and illustrating moral and religious instruction, from parables and history. His list of school-books is well chosen, and many of them are by Protestants.—Secretary Zopfer, a man of spirit, has published in Bavaria, an excellent ode on the Inquisition.—At Wirzburg and some other Popish Universities, the study of Scripture begins to be more cultivated.—But while, at Munich and Vienna, truths formerly suppressed, are now declared; and better methods are introduced for teaching the sciences and theology: at Augsburg, books are printed to extol the miracles, and recommend the worship of new saints, *e. g.* Bonaventure of Patenza; directing that confidence to be placed in a mere man, which is due only to the Redeemer. Even Reifner, a Divinity Professor at Munich, has translated from the Welsh, a piece on repentance, full of general declamation against sin, and laying great stress on deep sorrow and terror, but not leading men to know

the plagues of their heart, and the blemishes of their conduct. He has also published a translation from the Spanish, of Garcias's guide to eternal happiness. If the Jesuite may be believed, rather than Christ, eight days religious retirement, and following the exercises prescribed in that book, will procure eight thousand degrees of grace and glory. Among the pious emotions recommended, are thanks to God for damning Julian, Mahomet, Luther and Calvin. Luz, a Benedictine at Elchingen Gawsburg, has published illustrations of the life of Christ from all the four Gospels, where he teaches how to explain them in favour of Popery. Halteni also, a Benedictine, has translated from the French, and published at Augsburg, the Royal Path of the Cross, where much superstition and little rational instruction is put in the mouth of Christ.

In this year's journals, are interesting accounts, too large for being inserted in these hints, of a plan for academies in the Emperor's hereditary dominions; of an evangelic academy at Augsburg, and of an academy at Spire, where the instructions are different, for ordinary citizens, for tradesmen, and for those destined for the learned professions.

1778.

At Bayreuth, the city and country clergy subscribe for a common library, and meet twice a month, to converse on what they have read, and on matters relating to the pastoral office. Candidates for the ministry, and others who choose, are admitted to attend. Similar institutions take place at Augsburg, Anspach and Ottingen.—In the principalities of Anspach and Darmstadt, there

there are yearly synods under the care of the superintendants, where they converse on the state of religion and theological literature, the hinderances of the success of their office, and the means of removing them. At one meeting a question of theology, or a case relating to pastoral duty, is proposed, about which the clergy bring their thoughts at another. Synods thus managed, must promote love to study, diligence in pastoral duties, good taste in sermons, and friendship among the clergy. They may suggest useful improvements for schools and churches, and stir up watchfulness against the first appearance of dangerous errors, or of corruption in manners. Such meetings may be peculiarly useful to the country clergy, who have small libraries and little intercourse with the learned.—Eberhard, author of the apology for Socrates, is now professor of philosophy at Hall. Steinbart, teacher of divinity at Francfort on the Oder, has published at Züllichau, the Christian doctrine of happiness, in which the unscriptural sentiments, which have appeared for 12 years past in German books and journals, as to the divinity and atonement of Christ, are reduced to a system, with several additions of his own. One of his opinions is, that God has endued men with instincts well suited to their preservation, pleasure, and the propagating their kind, but too strong for their circumstances, as connected with others in society.—In many places of Protestant Germany, new collections have been made of hymns and spiritual songs. In many of them, several composed in the 17th century, with little taste, in too scholastic a style, and where playing on

words was substituted for pathetic sentiments, are very properly left out. Others of that century are altered, and inelegancies of style corrected. It had been well, however, if less freedom had been used with some of the older hymns. Is not Luther still esteemed a classic writer? and are not Gerhard's hymns written in a pure style, and full of strength and fire? These were introduced by the authority of princes and consistories. But unhappily many have altered their clear expressions of sound scriptural divinity, for expressions capable of a very different and opposite sense, or at least which conceal and leave out of sight, the truths which Luther justly deemed of highest importance. These changes are partly intended for uniting Lutherans with Calvinists and Papists, partly for pleasing those who deny or doubt the divinity and atonement of Christ, and justification by his merits. But political toleration doth not require, the depriving Christians of truths which tend to build them up in faith, holiness and comfort, or lessening that tendency by cold and ambiguous language. It is also a false delicacy, which rejects scripture expressions, the lamb of God, my treasure, my light, my life, &c. for the dry languid style of modern philosophy. Men, who explain away the most important doctrines of religion, will view with pleasure songs taken out of the hands of the common people, which preserved among them a sense of these doctrines. Many alterations in style have been to the worse. The modern tone of poetry is little suited to serious and solemn subjects. Since Luther's days, our language has become more effeminate, and less vigorous. Such changes should be made by consistories,

stories, or others publicly authorized. The essence of the Gospel should not be sacrificed to gain adversaries. New changes in every new edition of a song-book, make it impossible for servants and others, whose support leads them from place to place, to use the same book in two principalities. The consistories of neighbouring provinces should in this matter act by concert. The new hymn-book in Bayreuth, is formed on this plan, and no new song in it is to be used in public worship for five years, in which time it will gradually spread through the whole country. The Coburg and Heilbron hymn-books are excellent.

Counsellor Kochlenbrinner at Munich, sensible of the importance of sacred songs for exciting devotion, and fixing in the heart deep impressions of Divine things, has published a large collection for public worship, and two small ones, one for private devotion, and another for schools. He has the honour to be the first in the Popish Church, who has made such an attempt. The songs are partly chosen, partly composed, with good taste, and have been introduced with such prudence and zeal, that the design has succeeded. In many places, reliance on the merits of Christ is edifyingly represented as the highest comfort in life and death. But, alas! in others, the Virgin Mary is addressed, as the fountain of love, to impart from her fulness, produce repentance, and excite faith in Christ. This is asking from her, what God only can give. Her compassion in the hour of death, and bearing the soul in her arms to her Son, is idolatrously implored.—Modest Hahn, a Minorite, in the preface to a volume of sermons on the festivals of the blessed Virgin, which he has



published at Constance, 1777, says, that preachers should teach the dignity of the mediatorship of Christ as only and indispensibly necessary, and should not go too far in their panegyrics on the saints, or term Mary a Mediatress. Yet in the sermons themselves are such expressions as these : —A sinner need only sigh to Mary—Though he sigh late, he shall not sigh in vain—Though he were worse than Cain, Pharaoh or Judas, his last moment can through Mary be a moment of bliss—Life is to be found with Mary, as the mother of life—When you already see and feel the flames of hell, betake yourself to Mary—Her mercy is so great, that she will not thrust away the greatest sinner—She is the cause of salvation—Is Mary for us? who shall be against us?—When one diligently applies to Mary, he is oftener heard than when he applies to God and Jesus—Through Mary, the sick are made whole—She gives patience in trouble, devotion, purity of heart, faith, hope, charity—By her journey to Elizabeth, John was redeemed from original sin—In a sermon on *Cant. vi. 9.* he described, as if he had attended her, Mary's entrance into Heaven, after she had bruised the serpent's head—The sinner who comes to her, departs a penitent; the penitent a righteous person; the righteous person a saint—In the wrath of the Father against sinners, the Son shows the Father his wounds, and Mary shows the Son her breasts—The Son beholding the body of his Mother, from a dreadful lion, becomes a meek lamb—With Mary the Son divides his kingdom—Saints, by calling on Mary, have obtained speedier victory over temptation, than by calling on Jesus—Every inordinate affection must fall before Mary, as Da-  
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gon before the ark—She will carry on the victory, which in her first moments, by her immaculate conception, she obtained over the serpent—During the Old Testament, the favours of God only fell in drops; for Mary, the conduit through which Heaven would convey them, as yet failed. It is pity such passages abound in sermons, where youth is pathetically addressed to devote itself to God, and many moral and Christian subjects are brought home to the heart.—More exceptionable still are Joseph Hahn's sermons on the same festivals, Augsburg 1777. According to him, Mary is the maker of peace between God and man—Her humility turns away from us the curse of Eve—Her mercy overcomes the mercy of God—The thief on the cross, with many other sinners, were converted through her intercession—Her pains are the health of mankind—Christ divides with her his offices of advocate and king—Through her, heaven is again opened; and at her name the devils tremble. Yet this book is published with the permission of his superiors, and recommended by them as solid and judicious.—The bad paper, on which Pfalzer's sermons, Augsburg 1777, are printed, might have been more profitably used. In the sermon on St Seraphin, the barbarous manner in which he wounded and tortured his body, is extolled as a high act of virtue.—Griner's sermons at Tyrol, on the festivals of the holy Virgin, are full of allegorical absurdity, to encourage her worship. He observes, that the first letters of her name express her characters, Mediatrix, Adjutrix, Reparatrix, Illuminatrix, Advocata. Yet at Augsburgh, 1777, Sutor, in his instructions for youth, boldly attacks the prevail-  
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ing superstition of these parts : and Lindemayr, a Benedictine, published 3 volumes of sermons, practical, useful, and free beyond many Popish sermons, of the fabulous absurd stories too frequent, especially on the festivals of saints.

1779.

Many reformed families have lately returned to France, and, in the last four years, more than 400 persons. This we have learned from one, who himself goes to Nismes, as pastor of a Reformed church.—At Gottingen, the seminary for preachers flourishes.—At Berlin, those of the three religions intermarry, attend the baptisms of one another's children, and live in great unity and friendship. Their respective clergy seldom introduce their differences. In many families there, especially in those of high rank, the religious education is very defective.—At Copenhagen, the Royal College for inspecting church matters, has published a translation of the New Testament into the language of the Creoles, for the use of negroes in St Croix, St Thomas, and St John's.

Hontheim, suffragan to the bishop of Treves, who, under the name of Febronius, had so ably exposed the usurpations of the Pope, has openly retracted that book in the 78th year of his age, when, it may be supposed, his powers were considerably impaired.—Isenbiehl, a priest, and professor of Greek at Mentz, has been deprived of his office, and confined in a Bernardine monastery at Reingau, for publishing, without the permission of his superiors, an attempt to prove, that the prophecy *I. vii. 14.* neither literally nor typically relates to Christ, and is applied to him  
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by Matthew only in the way of accommodation. The archbishop of Mentz has prohibited the sale of the book.——Many of the Popish clergy at Munich and Ingolstadt, recommend in their sermons, love to the Protestants; and, throughout Bavaria, church and school reformation go on. Newhauser, a young professor at Ingolstadt, has published at Munich, 1778, devout addresses, in which appear many of the qualities of the pulpit-orator. It were to be wished, that he had more cultivated the critical study of the Scripture, and better restrained his fancy. In his 16th address, he says, “This day, by the Three-One God  
 “ Mary was crowned Queen of heaven and earth,  
 “ and constituted Protectress of mankind. What  
 “ therefore may we not expect from the inter-  
 “ cession of one so perfect? Every thing: if,  
 “ with a true and solid devotion, we approach  
 “ her throne.” It is strange, that a man of character should talk thus before the learned professors of Ingolstadt.——P. Beda Mayr, a Benedictine, pastor at Donawert, has published, 1777 and 1778, six volumes of sermons, preferable to many printed at Augsburgh: though, in what he says of the imperfect indulgences acquired by saying thrice a day the Ave Maria, attending the processions of the sacrament to the sick, &c. he encourages that superstition, against which, in other discourses, he gives excellent warning.——Several Popish clergy in Germany have lately composed and published hymns for public worship, some of them excellent, though prejudice has prevented their having the reception they deserve: while hymns are used, in which Mary and Joseph are joined to Jesus as the refuge of the soul.

soul.——At length the Jesuits have found a safe retreat, and procured a firm establishment in the Catholic states of the Russian empire. At the request of the Czarina, the late Pope Clement XIV. and the present Pope Pius VI. have given liberty to the regular clergy of that society, in the Russian dominions, to retain their habit and revenues, to perform sacred offices, to admit noviciates, and to do whatever is necessary for preserving their society.

1780.

Gruner, divinity-professor at Hall, in a compend of divinity, 1777, argues against the divinity and atonement of Christ, and the eternity of hell torments, and, like the Papists, confounds justification with sanctification.——Putter, a judge at Gottingen, has published a view of the Christian religion in its true connexion and excellence. The strain is pious and evangelical, the reasonings solid, and the style plain and affecting.——Herling, pastor at Nachtersted, in the principality of Halberstadt, has erected a seminary for training up children for schoolmasters.——Spagenberg's compend of the Christian doctrine in the Moravian churches, published at Barby, 1779, is plain, accurate, and free from the enthusiasm and errors in many former books of that sect.

The Empress-queen has appointed professors of pastoral theology in all her universities. At her expence, a book of Catholic instructions and prayers, printed at Prague, 1779, has been translated into different languages. It well explains praying in the name of Jesus, and yet contains prayers to the virgin Mary, St Joseph, guardian-angels,



angels, &c. not consistent with that explication. ——— Simplicianus Haan, an Augustine, preached a sermon at Munnheim on the Rhine, which was afterwards published with the approbation of Hoofman at Cologne, the ordinary censor of books, full of gross misrepresentations of the Protestant doctrines, and insisting, that Luther had honestly confessed his learning, in a dispute with the devil, his arguments against the mass. The government at Dusseldorp, on account of these and other offensive articles, ordered the sermon to be confiscated; and the Pope's nuncio at Cologne laid the preacher under a temporary suspension. ——— The archbishop of Cologne has published an order, October 1778, what, and in what manner, the monks should study; which does great honour to his judgment.

1781.

Laws of ecclesiastical polity, agreed upon by the united synod of Lutherans and Calvinists in Poland, were published at Warsaw 1780. The Calvinists enjoy great freedom in the Danish territories, though in some places they are not allowed to make proselytes, or to preach against other religions. Papists and Mennonites are under greater restrictions; cannot marry Lutherans without a licence; and when they do, must educate the children of both sexes Lutheran. Lutheran preachers, who deviate from the established doctrines, are deposed: but the mildness of government allows them pensions. ——— The diet at Stockholm, 10th January 1779, granted the free exercise of religion to strangers settling in Sweden: yet so, that they should be incapable of offices in the state; restrained from public schools, seminaries,

seminaries, and monasteries, for spreading their opinions ; and not allowed public ceremonies and processions.

The Emperor Joseph II. by edicts, October 1781, has restored to the bishops the rights of which the Pope had deprived them : and permitted all his subjects to read the scriptures, and to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience ; no bells, clocks, or public entrance being allowed to their meeting-houses. All the children of a Roman Catholic, and the daughters of a Protestant father, must be educated in the established religion. Those not Popish, may be admitted to civil or academic, as they have formerly been to military offices : and no oath is imposed on them inconsistent with their religion. — The elector of Mentz has abolished three monasteries, and appropriated their revenues to the universities. — Luther's German version of the Bible soon occasioned Emser's translation of the New Testament, and Dietenberger's and Eck's translations of the whole Bible, which not long after were followed by Ulenberg's. Though they all complain of the unfaithfulness of Luther's translation, they all avail themselves of it. The two first transcribe it in most places, and, where they deviate from it, generally follow the Vulgate. Weitenaver has begun one German translation of the Bible, and Fleischietz another, in purer language, and with less attachment to the Vulgate. — A translation of the New Testament into Italian by Abbot Antonio Martini, is now publishing at Florence, and is the first which has appeared with the approbation of the Pope.

1782.

In the Austrian hereditary dominions, Hungary not included, 8 or 9 new evangelical churches are formed, with the prospect of more.—In consequence of a question proposed by the Hamburg society for encouraging arts and manufactures, whether the educating children in orphan houses, or privately, is least expensive, and most for their own interest and that of the state, three essays have been published. They all, from strong facts and reasonings, (of which Dr Seiler gives an account, p. 118—128.), determine for the last.—In consequence of a premium offered by a gentleman at Mannheim, for the best essay on the means of preventing child-murder, many proposals have been made, and ably supported; an account of which, with his own sentiments, Dr S. gives, p. 49—74.

The Emperor has abolished several monasteries and nunneries, provided for the maintenance of those who belonged to them, and appropriated their revenues partly to free schools, partly to orphan houses, where the children of peasants are instructed in husbandry, &c. He has allocated a hundred thousand florins yearly, for educating the children of those who are, or have been soldiers, in religion and virtue, and in such subordination and hardiness, as may afterwards fit them for the army. In fifty regiments of infantry, there are educated about 48 children for each. It is expected, that in 10 years, this institution will supply four hundred more recruits for the army. The abolition of the censure of books in the Austrian dominions, has produced several bold and sensible publications in defence of toleration, for abolishing the temporal jurisdiction of the Pope, reforming

the clergy, and discouraging superstition. A weekly paper published at Prague, full of liberal sentiments, first appeared under the title of *The Scourge of the Preachers*. The great design of it was to banish from the pulpit false interpretations of scripture, ludicrous stories of apparitions and miracles, &c. It has greatly offended most of the clergy, and occasioned many replies. The third paper, dated 3d May, criticises a printed sermon of a celebrated orator on the dignity and privileges of the priesthood. "The priesthood, (*says the orator*) conveys a power and authority over the person, and adorable humanity of the Saviour himself. Though Priests are only his viceroy, yet, every day he subjects himself to them, and pays them the strictest obedience. At their command, he descends from heaven, and, in their hands, repeats a thousand times over what was once done in the womb of the virgin: Divine faith! didst thou not aid me, I could not comprehend this." Divine faith! exclaims the critic, if thou comest not to my help, I must account this nonsense and blasphemy. The orator goes on: "The clergy's jurisdiction is incomprehensible (1.) in its extent; no office however great, no prince however illustrious being exempt from it. (2.) In its objects: Who are the parties, between whom they interpose as arbiters? The offended God, and sinful man. The Lord of Hosts leaves his rights and prerogatives in the hands of the priests, and appoints them his commissioners to conclude a peace between him and sinners. He is ready to submit to their decisions, and to renounce the claims of his justice, so  
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“ soon as they have absolved the guilty.” The Scourge, after citing these passages, adds: Is not this saying, that to please the priest, the God of righteousness must cease to be righteous? O more than almighty priest! command God to create a new world, and he must obey thee: command him to damn all with whom thou art displeased, and he must hearken to thy voice: and command also, if thou tremblest not for thy own fate, that he banish from the world pride and arrogance: I tremble for thee, O thou Lord of thy Maker! if I incur thy displeasure; for the Creator himself cannot rescue me, without thy permission. But indeed, these reveries are too absurd to be parodied. Can Christian humility suggest such bold expressions? Is not this teaching the illiterate vulgar to reverence the priest more than God?—A similar weekly paper is begun at Vienna, intended to criticise sermons, where folly, superstition and error, are inculcated, instead of the word of God. Zeal, boldness, love of truth, tempered with candour and moderation, appear in the first numbers of this work.—*The Monastic Spirit*, printed, Vienna 1781, after many judicious remarks on the corruption of monasteries and the hinderances of their reformation, proposes, that they should be changed into retreats for such who have worn out their lives in the public service, or for men of genius disabled by poverty from carrying on their studies; and nunneries into honourable retirements for widows and female orphans, whose rank and delicacy incapacitate them for earning their bread as servants, &c.—The Archbishop of Constance, in a decree, 19th January, has greatly diminish-



ed the festivals in his diocese.—The Bishop of Verona has prohibited the clergy of Tyrol, from receiving any Popish indulgences, till he has examined them, and till they are permitted by the Emperor.—These ecclesiastical reformations have proceeded on the principle, that the commission of the Apostles was confined, to preaching the word, dispensing the sacraments, and superintending the worship and discipline of the Church; and that supposing their successors vested with a greater power than they had, is absurd.—In Bohemia and Moravia, tumults have happened through the influence of the monks, and especially of the Ex-Jesuits, in opposition to the toleration of Protestants. Some bishops have suppressed or even opposed the Imperial edicts; and some Protestants imprudently assumed greater liberties than they allowed. At Raab in Hungary, a book was published with the permission of his superiors, and distributed gratis by the Canon Holassy, containing fifty reasons for preferring Popery to all other religions; in which the Lutherans are slandered with paying that honour to Luther's picture, pulpit, clothes, &c. which they deny to the crucifix; and that they even pray for his protection. In consequence of these tumults, and the representations of the clergy, a new edict has appeared, by which they who claim toleration, must declare their principles, and the reasons on which they are founded, in the presence of certain clergymen, who in a gentle manner shall endeavour to reclaim them. When 100 families, or 500 souls claim toleration, they shall be allowed private schools and places of worship. The popish clergy shall pay one civil visit to dissidents

on their death-bed ; but, if their aid is refused, give them no further trouble.—The best German translation of the Bible for the use of Catholics, was published at Prague, 1781, by the encouragement of the late Empress Queen Maria Theresa, to render the reading the sacred oracles more easy and common. In the New Testament, which is better executed than the old, are many excellent explicatory notes, and useful introductions to the Epistles \*. The worthy Prince and Archbishop of Prague, to whom was committed the oversight of this translation, has also encouraged the publishing a Bohemian bible.—Jo. Leopold van Hau, bishop of Konigratz, in a pastoral letter, approves the toleration granted by the Emperor to the Protestants ; prohibits his clergy from disturbing them in the exercise of their rights, or intruding on their death-beds ; recommends their abstaining from controversial sermons ; and when in their catechetical instructions they establish, from Scripture and the Fathers, the grounds of the Catholic faith, doing it, after the example of the council of Trent, without invectives on Luther or Calvin. He further enjoins, that when Protestants apply to them, for baptisms, marriages or burials, they shall abstain from all forms in these services opposite to Protestant principles. The bishop of Spire, in a pastoral letter, recommends to his clergy, diligently visiting the sick, and threatens with deposition, such who for

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\* If I can judge of this translation, from some chapters of the epistle to the Romans, inserted as a specimen in Dr Seiler's journal, it is a just and fair one. How to reconcile the encouraging such a work, with the known bigotry of the late Empress Queen, I have not been able to learn, either from books or conversation.

the future shall neglect that duty. The Archbishop of Saltzburg, in a pastoral letter, condemns too much expence on the ornaments of churches, altars, sacred vestments, &c. which had better be employed in relieving the necessitous. These instructions he has seconded by his own example. At a solemn jubilee feast, instead of the usual donations for pretended religious uses, he gave considerable sums for incurables, madmen and idiots.—In Venice, Tuscany, and even the Ecclesiastic State, efforts have been made for allowing the marriage of the clergy; which, however, as was naturally to be expected, the Pope and Cardinals have discouraged. A large and excellent anonymous German treatise was published this year for allowing these marriages.

Important as these anecdotes are, from the first three parts of Dr Seiler's Journals, 1782; the following, from part fourth, are equally so.

A short view of the Emperor's steps for promoting ecclesiastical reformation may be agreeable to many. The restraints on the liberty of the press, so unfriendly to the progress of knowledge, were taken off by an edict 11th June 1781, and all books of importance in the Emperor's hereditary dominions were for the future to be censored at Vienna, with the word *admittitur*, when approved; *permittitur*, when the censors chose not to approve; *toleratur*, when a few propositions unfriendly to religion and the State, were mixed with a much greater number of an useful tendency. Books immoral or obscene; where ridicule instead of reasoning is used against the Christian religion; or private characters, even of the meanest

est subjects, were lampooned; are severely prohibited. 27th November, it was enacted, that the bull Unigenitus should be of no force. 4th May, that the bulla cœnæ should be erased from the rituals. 10th November, that subjects in the hereditary dominions should no more repair to the German College at Rome. 21st August, that no ecclesiastical honour should be sought for at Rome, without the consent of the Prince. 31st June, that there should be no difference between Protestant and Popish subjects, except that the first should not be allowed the public exercise of their religion. 15th October, Those banished for religion are invited back. 5th December, They who have voluntarily emigrated on that account, if they return within year and day, shall be welcomed. 13th October 1781, *The patent of toleration* was published, allowing the private exercise of religion every where, to those of the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions, and of the Greek Church. When there were a hundred families of dissidents, houses of prayer, schools and burial-places were allowed, without bells, or entrance from the street; where the Gospel might be preached, the sacraments dispensed, and burials accompanied by their clergy. They were permitted to appoint their own schoolmasters, who should however observe the method and order of teaching prescribed for the Catholic schools; and to choose their pastors, if they gave them salaries, the jura stolæ being reserved to the parish minister. The judging their religious processes is lodged with the civil magistrate, assisted by one or more divines, who shall decide according to the principles of the dissidents. Children of a Catholic

Catholic father shall all be educated in his religion: but, where the father is Protestant, and the mother Catholic, the sons shall be educated in the Protestant, the daughters in the Popish religion. Dissidents may procure, by dispensation, licences for purchasing houses and lands, burrough and corporation privileges, and academic and civil offices. *This patent was explained by another, 2d January 1782.* When one receives a religion different from the Catholic, he must acquaint the magistrate of the place, who gives him a schedule, and reports it to the circle, that when a hundred families have got such schedules, superior courts may be informed. Dissidents must use no threatenings or marks of contempt for gaining professytes; and shall be punished as rioters, if they insult churches or images. In taverns, coffee-houses, &c. all disputes about, and insults for different religious principles, are prohibited. None shall disturb the dissidents in their worship. Magistrates must treat them with gentleness; and when they punish them, declare, that it is not for their faith, but for crimes which would equally be punished in a Catholic. The clergy shall avoid controversy and reproachful language, both in the pulpit, in catechizing, and in private conversation. The dissidents shall furnish themselves with the pastors they need, from Hungary or Teschen.—In consequence of these edicts, many new churches have been formed and provided with ministers in Austria, and the Emperor's part of Silesia; and knowledge is every day increasing in his hereditary dominions. Many bishops are anxious to introduce better methods of instruction, for which they have now the greater advantage,



as they can exercise their functions according to the dictates of conscience. Only, they must not intermeddle in political matters. From the same liberal spirit, a German school has been opened at Prague for the Jewish synagogue there; and excellent directions have been published for the theological schools in the Emperor's hereditary dominions. The university of Mentz, lately presented with the rich revenues of three monasteries, seems disposed to adopt the plan of the Imperial universities, and is about to erect a literary society to which Protestants shall be admitted. The prudent and steady efforts of the late and present Electors of Bavaria, to introduce knowledge and literature in that state, are triumphing over the violent opposition of the people, stirred up by ignorant and superstitious clergymen.—It was suspected that the Archbishop of Vienna was no friend to the Emperor's generous designs. He could not be ignorant, how violently many of his clergy, both in Vienna and the country, declaimed against the Imperial decree: and as he gave none of them the gentlest reproof, it was concluded, that he was pleased with, perhaps had secretly directed, their conduct. Many of the Lent sermons, instead of preaching Christ crucified, censured as heretical the best late writings against dangerous prejudices and abuses. No methods, however, for preventing this, were taking by his Eminence. It was even alleged that the measures for promoting the reading the Scripture among the people, were much retarded by his opposition. A Society undertook from time to time to publish remarks on sermons  
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of a bad tendency. There would have been no occasion for this society, and it would soon have expired, had his Eminence exerted his authority, for preventing or censuring the abuse of the pulpit. If the silence of the Archbishop gave surprise, the indignation of the candid was raised by Jos. Pocklin, one of his clergy, from the pulpit representing that society in the blackest colours, and ascribing to them the basest and most unworthy motives, before even the first of their publications appeared ; and still more by a Catholic institute published by Pocklin's colleague, Patric, stuffed with panegyrics on superstition and false devotion. Take a specimen : " The looking  
 " for a blessing from a wooden image of the  
 " child Jesus with a curled periwig, is often  
 " more profitable than receiving a blessing from  
 " the hand of a priest. The hanging pieces of  
 " gold and silver on images, is a means of obtain-  
 " ing grace. Devotion should be paid to the  
 " fleshly heart of Christ, to the wounds in his  
 " side, to the nails of his cross. Pilgrims bid  
 " fairer for the grace of God, than they who  
 " stay at home. Prayers are acceptable, when,  
 " beside God, they are addressed to some saint.  
 " The tribunal of the Inquisition is of a salutary  
 " tendency ; and, in the countries where it was  
 " introduced, has prevented bloody wars. A  
 " sacred darkness continually obscures faith :  
 " and he does no evil, who mistakes his king,  
 " and honours another instead of him." The writer of these absurdities is one of the clergy in the metropolitan church of Vienna, and boasts, that all of them, the five youngest excepted, are of his sentiments. At a few steps from the palace  
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of the Archbishop, he goes on with these instructions, and pleads the approbation of his Ordinary; which his Grace has never thought fit openly to contradict. This emboldened father Ludwig the capuchin, to deliver up to Satan the authors of truths for preachers, if they would not retract. It is said, that while the Archbishop encouraged Ludwig, Ruschitzka was rebuked for condemning in a sermon the worshipping Christ in parts, and consequently adoring the fleshly heart of Christ; that he forbid students of divinity all intercourse with the worthy P. Blarer, who had trained up so many useful priests; and had discharged some of his clergy from conversing with men, who laboured to enlighten the public.—These anecdotes are extracted by Dr Seiler from Routenstrouch on the conduct of bishops in the Catholic states; who hardly would have ventured to have published it at Vienna, if the facts had not been well known.

1783.

The new Riga Hymn-book, though it contains only 800 songs, comprehends a greater variety of useful subjects than any, except Cramer's: and, except the Anspach collection, there is none in which the changes are made with such taste, and the pure doctrines of the Gospel so carefully preserved.

Seibt published at Prague, 1782, a book of instructions and prayers for youth, which comes nearer the Scripture doctrine of justification through the merits of Christ, than most Popish manuals.—The spirit of intolerance and persecution, cannot be extinguished in the Romish Church, while the bishops take the following oath:

“ I

“ I swear and vow, with all my strength, to attack and persecute heretics and schismatics, and never to lay down my weapons till they are utterly brought under, and rooted out \*.” This oath is not yet in desuetude. The Pope’s legate should have given the pall some time ago to the bishop of Mahilow. But it was put off, the government esteeming this oath dangerous.

1784.

It has been alleged, that the shame of public church admonitions, tempts many to child-murder. But, in many churches, where this discipline takes place, in twenty or thirty years there have been no instances of that crime; and in other places where that discipline is not used, it is committed.

The Inquisition was abolished at Sicily 27th March, without disturbance, and with general approbation.—At Florence, July 1782, the tribunal of the Inquisition was abolished in the whole

\* Dr Woodward bishop of Cloyne, having brought the same charge against the oath taken by Popish bishops at their consecration; Dr Butler, Mr O’Leary, and other Irish Catholics, have endeavoured to vindicate it. Dr Butler particularly alleged that the clause, *salvo jure ordinis*, without prejudice to our state, removes all fear of injuring the allegiance due to princes. Dr William Hales of Trinity College, in his considerations on the political influence of the doctrine of the Pope’s supremacy, Dublin 1787, fully vindicates the bishop, and shows, that the clause pled by Dr Butler only means, without prejudice to the rights of his order, and respects not allegiance. In his survey of the modern state of the Church of Rome, Dublin 1788, he further proves against the same writers, that the clause, *hereticos pro posse persequar & expugnabo*, is an obligation to persecute heretics, and oppose them with temporal weapons; and that this appears the sense of the church of Rome, both from her decrees and practice, and even from late instances of persecuting zeal in the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions.

whole Dukedom.—So averse is Rome from toleration, that Count Trautmanndorf's excellent work on that subject, has been represented by Memochi, as sprung from the bottom of hell.—The city of Cologne not being dependent on the Elector, he could not reform, according to his wish, the University there, which had declined under the Jesuits: and therefore has erected an academy at Bonn, the place of his residence. The apostolic nuncio at Cologne has endeavoured to destroy that good work: and the Inquisition at Rome, 20th June 1783, condemned Father Hedrick, who was the soul of it, as an heretic. The academy, however, remains; and it is supposed that the new Elector, brother to the great Joseph, will not be much discomposed by briefs from Rome.—The bishop of Spire has appointed a new festival in honour of the immaculate conception of Mary; and the Pope has granted plenary indulgences to all who on that day visit certain churches in the bishopric, and pray for the union of Christian princes, and rooting out of error.—A servant-maid, at St Peter's church, Munich, pretended last year to observe an image of Mary, on the altar, turn its eyes. Though several of the first rank and greatest judgment and integrity could not observe the smallest motion, those who questioned the miracle, were run down as heretics or freethinkers.—An anonymous piece by a Roman Catholic was printed at Francfort 1784, *On Christian Toleration for Priests and Monks*. The reasoning, arrangement, and style, are excellent, and the spirit it breathes is truly Christian. Sect. 3. The author honestly represents the prevalence of intolerant principles among Catholics: "In Rome,  
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“ the centre of our Church, and in Spain, Portu-  
 “ gal, &c. the Inquisition yet remains. If few-  
 “ er are burnt for heretics, it must be ascribed to  
 “ the humanity of princes, not to the mitigated  
 “ spirit of the Inquisition, which retains the old  
 “ ideas of the rights of the Church to inflict bodi-  
 “ ly punishments, and tries the accused in the  
 “ same detestable manner. Our ecclesiastic law  
 “ is thoroughly interwoven with intolerant prin-  
 “ ciples. The 2d book of the decretals exhibits  
 “ bishops as temporal judges. The greater part  
 “ of our lower clergy are intolerant. Priests are  
 “ not obliged, at the entrance of their office, to  
 “ renounce these principles. There is, there-  
 “ fore, no security that inquisitions and Paris  
 “ massacres should not be renewed. The good  
 “ sense and sound judgment of princes, is too  
 “ weak a fence against fanaticism. Though  
 “ for a time it may be thereby restrained, and  
 “ kept within bounds; when that external hin-  
 “ derance is removed, it will overflow its banks,  
 “ and rage more violently than ever. A devout,  
 “ zealous, well-meaning prince, but of little  
 “ judgment and penetration, educated by a monk,  
 “ and under the tutelage of another’s understand-  
 “ ing,—he is the man for the priests. A breath  
 “ from them will easily blow up a flame. Be-  
 “ sides, new scenes may open. Good sense has  
 “ forced itself into palaces; and monarchs enter-  
 “ tain just and liberal sentiments of the rights of  
 “ mankind, and of the limits of religious zeal.  
 “ But, how long will this light shine? Ridicu-  
 “ lous as Bostowich’s geometrical prophecy is,  
 “ of a sudden decline of knowledge and learn-  
 “ ing; it is, alas! too probable, that sooner or  
 “ later

“ later this will happen. The glimmering light,  
 “ which now flutters over countries where dark-  
 “ nefs long dwelt, may be again obscured or ex-  
 “ tinguished. The bounds of church and state  
 “ may be again loft or confounded: and princes  
 “ and ftatemen, groping in the dark, may have  
 “ no power to refift the elasticity of prieffly per-  
 “ fecution. Say not, that the wifdom of prin-  
 “ ces is fufficient security againft that evil. The  
 “ fpirit of intolerance furvives. Night may re-  
 “ turn, and the lions roar after their prey. When  
 “ nobles muft be conftained by law to learn the  
 “ Lord’s Prayer and the Creed, materials of new  
 “ hiftories of holy wars and of the Inquifition,  
 “ will not long be wanting. Would we in good  
 “ earneft conquer intolerance, we muft not drive  
 “ it to its ftrong holds, but force it out of  
 “ them. The Church muft renounce her cove-  
 “ nant with perfecution, and drive her away, as  
 “ the Gofpel’s deadly foe. Are not our times  
 “ prepared for fo glorious a deed? How can  
 “ the prefent Head of the church better pre-  
 “ ferve the efteem which his laft predeceffor  
 “ gained even among Proteftants, than by at-  
 “ tempting this? Let it be faid, Jofeph II. has  
 “ again planted toleration in the garden of the  
 “ church: Pius VI. has watered: God has given  
 “ the increafe.”

1785.

In Meiner’s Letters on Switzerland, the oppo-  
 fite manners in Laufanne and Geneva are well-  
 painted. Purity of manners, as well as of lan-  
 guage, diftinguifh Laufanne. None of the ladies  
 of diftinction imitate thofe of France, or will  
 publickly fuffer a gallant. By thofe in the middle  
 line of life, ornaments are lefs affected than with

us, though paint is more used. The greatest blemish of both sexes, is a passion for gaming, which often makes their pleasant and beautiful public walks almost deserted. This is the more singular, as they never play deep. The clergy practise this common amusement without offence. From the strictness of the people, and the clergy's attention to their morals, no houses of bad fame are allowed. Though many youths of distinction are educated at Lausanne, neither infidelity nor profligacy of manners, dare to appear openly, and to attempt gaining proselytes.—Far different is Geneva. The buildings are large and expensive, the inhabitants wealthy, and an incredible number of beautiful country-seats surround it on all sides. The civil war was less owing to a defective legislation, than to growing depravity of manners, both among high and low\*: for even to the lower ranks has this corruption spread. The works of Voltaire and Rousseau are read in shops, manufactories, and workhouses. Perhaps the wealth which has flowed upon Geneva from her fine artists since 1738, when corporations were dissolved, and every artist allowed to follow what art he pleased, has accelerated her corruption. The strict church discipline, which Calvin introduced immediately after the Reformation, is now gone, and with

\* Here Dr Seiler remarks: "I have had certain accounts, by private letters, that in many families of distinction, in that city, Christianity is almost entirely neglected: and, by modish and excessive refinement, the children are formed to levity, and rendered incapable of serious religious reflection. Hence solid and edifying preachers are despised by this race of men. Only they who bring to the pulpit master-pieces of eloquence are sometimes attended; whose discourses are blamed or praised, just as dramatic performances would be; and hence can have little or no influence on the heart."

with it the authority of the clergy. Ludicrous ideas are affixed to the very name, by the followers of Voltaire. Ladies of distinction give no signs of devotion in church. They laugh, they talk, they adjust their dress, they flutter with their fans, as if they were in a jovial meeting. This indecent levity continued, when the young clergymen went up to the pulpit, and I suppose read prayers and directions, relating to the approaching communion; for through the noise I could not hear distinctly. They became more quiet and grave, when the preacher appeared, and took occasion, from the mournful state of the town, to exhort all ranks, and especially the youth, to unity and reverence for law. Probably, however, this was more to be ascribed to the curiosity, than to the devotion of the hearers: for when the sermon was ended, in the moment immediately before communicating, the former noise and dissipation returned. Even when communicating, they could not so far govern themselves, as to suppress the appearances of prophanity and scoffing, which their former conversation had impressed on their countenances; or to avoid giving offence, by assuming airs of seriousness. Certainly Rousseau, perhaps even Voltaire, would have witnessed with indignation this unnatural impiety, in ladies proud of their excellent education. Formerly, adultery was considered at Geneva as a most shocking crime, and divorce was rendered as difficult as possible. Now the first is laughed at, and the second more easily and frequently obtained, than at London or Paris. Their old sumptuary laws are fallen into desuetude, and luxury grows incredibly. In 24 families, they daily eat on silver-plate; and in between three and four hundred,



the turins and large dishes, though not the trenchers, are silver. The lowest ranks are mad on pomp and magnificence. Labourers will half starve themselves through the week, that they may appear genteelly dressed, and travel in coach on the Sabbath. The wives of manufacturers are as elegantly attired, as ladies in Germany, when going to an assembly. An insatiable desire of making a grand appearance, is accompanied with a sordid covetousness, perhaps partly owing to the dearth of the necessaries of life, much increased by the multitude of strangers who resort to Geneva.—So far as the translator knows, many of the clergy in Geneva are men of distinguished abilities, amiable characters, excellent writers on the Deistical controversy, and moral subjects; and though perhaps allied to some pretended German Reformers, in their Socinian and Arian tenets, yet no way tinctured with their scepticism and contempt of the Bible. Yet what a contrast betwixt Meiner's character of the people, and that given them by Bishop Burnet in his travels, Letter from Zurich, 1685! May not this be owing to the opposing, or at least omitting in their sermons, those peculiar truths of the Gospel, by faith in which, the heart is purified?

The Elector of Treves, in a pastoral letter, 1784, exhorts carefully to study the Scriptures, and to preach the pure word of God. An anonymous learned and candid Catholic, has published at Sultzbuch, 1785, a Latin and German mass-book, that they who attend mass may know what they are doing and praying; that the Christian faith may be restored to the purity which it possessed, when many of the prayers in the canon of the mass were composed, as to transubstantiation,



tion, &c. He condemns depriving the laity of the cup.

1786.

The Elector of Mentz, by an edict January 1785, declares all future Papal dispensations in his dominions invalid, unless examined and confirmed by his Vicar-General.—A Protestant consistory was opened at Vienna, June 1785, to superintend the evangelical churches in the hereditary dominions, Hungary excepted.—Young children of Alsace Protestants, being often seduced to disobey their parents, and become Papists, the King of France has enacted, that no child under 14 years of age be allowed to renounce Protestantism.—Since the Counts of Sickingen became Popish, in the middle of the last century, Lutherans have been deprived of their churches and ecclesiastical revenues, to which they were entitled by the peace of Westphalia, notwithstanding frequent memorials to the Counts, the Evangelic Body, and the Emperor, and even their offering to their prince one half of what belonged to them in the normal year\*.——Nicolai, in his examination of Garves's objections to his travels, Berl. 1786, proves the secret endeavours of the Ex-Jesuits in different parts, especially Russia and Bavaria, to subject those of other communions to the Pope's yoke. Besides, the opposition to the Emperor's tolerant measures, and violation of his edicts, shows that Protestantism is, and may be still more in danger.—A book in the form of a romance, intituled, A Discovery of the System of a Citizen  
of

\* *i. e.* The year which was to determine the future rights of the three religions, by what in that year they respectively possessed.

of the World, Rome 1786, intimates that the Jesuits have got the ascendant in several societies of free masons : and as, formerly, they endeavoured to spread superstition and ignorance, so now, to promote a pretended improvement of the understanding and unbelief, finally to regain their influence.—Improbable as these thoughts seem, they have made much noise, and perhaps have some truth at bottom.—A cursory representation of modern Jesuitism, Germany 1786, is designed to show, that the Ex-Jesuits, and others who join in their plans, are endeavouring to promote such an ecclesiastic union, as would greatly endanger Protestantism. The superintendent, Stark, in his St Nicaïs, makes his hero find quiet of soul in Catholicism. Schulz of Gießen, proposes a council of men like-minded with the Mentz Jesuits, for union with the Catholics. Protestants had need to be on their guard, lest the appearances of a tolerant spirit and brotherly love which Catholics put on in some places, should lull them asleep. Jankswitch, one of the principal Ex-Jesuits in Russia, has such influence at Petersburg, that the Russian evangelical churches are in danger of being gradually deprived of their liberty. Missionaries from the Ex-Jesuits endeavour to pervert students from Denmark and Norway, and allow them to study the Lutheran theology, that they may be able to answer at the examination of candidates, and, when they obtain charges, gradually gain them over to Popery. Dr Seiler thinks the apprehensions here expressed too great. Yet he adds, So long as the Bishop of Rome claims a divine right to rule all Christendom, yearly excommunicates

nicates all who are not Catholics, endeavours to extirpate them in Popish countries, and to introduce Popery in Protestant lands; so long as Bishops swear to forward these designs, several private Catholics are animated by the same spirit, and monks and missionaries are employed to gain profelytes; an outward union of the Church cannot be expected, nor even an union in spirit and truth.

1787.

Petitpierre published in French, at Hamburg, 1786, *The Plan of God with respect to Men. P. 1. On the infinite Goodness of God.* The author was some years ago deprived of his office for preaching against the eternity of hell torments. His church complained to the King of Prussia, as Lord of the Principality of Neufchatel: who wrote them, that since their articles of faith would have it so, he could not hinder the people of Neufchatel from being eternally damned. \*

Ehler, philosophy professor at Kiel, published, 1786, *Hints to good Princes, &c.* His second tract relates to the danger of the Protestant and Greek Churches, from the Jesuits introducing intolerant principles. When Germany discovers such desire of being free from the oppressing Papal yoke, it is surprising, that a great empire has granted an establishment to an order, which continually aims at the increase of their own power; brings princes, by the most shameful chains, under their influence and subjection; with whom, where the wealth and power of their order are concerned, no principles of honour and virtue are

\* Protecting the rights of an establishment, was good; but this manner of doing it was neither tender nor pious.

are sacred; who approve dissimulation as to the most important doctrines of religion, and solemn oaths and contracts, when the Popish interest, and their own, may be thereby advanced; who scruple not assassinating or poisoning rulers, or other persons of consequence, whom they cannot gain over; who think, that the most abominable vices cease to be criminal when they promote their cause; who penetrate into the secrets of royal cabinets, and private families; who form their members, by all the arts of policy and disguise, to assume the most opposite professions and appearances, and blindly to obey the General of their order†. Ehler then gives some cautions as to the toleration of Catholics in Protestant countries. He chiefly aims at Sweden, where indulgences are like to be carried too far.—Ehler's third tract contains a plan of articles of faith, to be required of all strangers who apply for admission into a state, and the free exercise of their religion. He well observes, that a wise government may justly tolerate natives in sentiments, the spread of which, by the admission of strangers who maintain them, they have every reason to prevent. Rational and moderate Catholics will approve his articles, which are chiefly levelled against the Ex-Jesuits. He says, p. 301, Flattering hopes are entertained with high probability by that order, that when the advancement of knowledge and sound policy shall overturn in Germany, &c. the Papal throne, it shall again be erected with the highest glory in Russia; and  
a new

† Seiler says, "The great and good Empress of Russia was chiefly misled by a Prince who was near her, and a tool of the Jesuits."

a new Pope, appearing in the General of their order, shall extend his unlimited influence, not only over the Russian empire, but the whole East. Much has been done for this purpose, in all the Eastern countries, especially China. May the sharp-sighted eagle-eye of the great Empress of Russia discern the hurtfulness of that order, before the infection, which it is like to spread, become general and incurable.

1788.

The Emperor, by an edict this year, prohibits the printing indulgences, prayers, directories, &c. which encourage error and superstition, by ascribing to indulgences any effect on souls in purgatory.—The Ex-Jesuits have erected a fraternity against the enemies of Mary and all Saints. The Pope, in a bull 5th April 1786, confirms this society; and, to encourage the worship of the Virgin, and of all saints, promises for every morning in which one shall repeat the antiphone, &c. with a contrite heart, an indulgence for 100 days. —A remarkable instance of intolerance is related by Bohmer in his magazine for ecclesiastic law, vol. 1. Gotting. 1787, p. 333. A proposal was made at the Imperial court 1733, for either bringing over to Popery, or ruining a great part of the world. Clement XII. was the contriver of the abominable design: and the Jesuits entered at least into some parts of the plan. But the project, at least in its most dreadful designs, came to nothing.



## NUMBER X.

*Vorläufige Darstellung des heutigen Jesuitismus.  
Deutschland 1786, n. p. 376. i. e. A cursory  
Representation of modern Jesuitism.*

C. 1. **I**Gnatus Loyola, born 1491, obtained a bull from Paul II. 1540, for the society of Jesus. The design of the institution, was to erect an universal monarchy among the most enlightened nations, both the design and means of accomplishing it being carefully concealed. Assuming the appearance of humility, disclaiming all external violence, pretending to renounce riches and power: the order knew the art, while they ruled princes, of persuading them, that they ruled their subjects according to their own will; so that in serving these spiritual despots they felt not their slavery. Hence philosophers and politicians, laymen and clergy, trembled at the calumnies, insinuated under the veil of religion, by which these venerable fathers, if offended, would accomplish their ruin. To give the greater influence to his plans, like many lawgivers and institutors of orders, Loyola ascribed them to God. The chief pillars on which his system rested were, (1.) Fraud and deceit are often necessary to promote the interests of religion. (2.) The society's plans must be hid in impenetrable darkness. Their rules must not be promiscuously imparted to every member; and the informing strangers of certain privileges granted by the Pope to this order, is severely prohibited. Hence the late King of Portugal, in his ma-  
nifesto

nifesto to his bishops observed, that few even of the professed Jesuits knew their own constitution, privileges and statutes: and that their superiors chastise and punish, not by laws openly promulgated, but by arbitrary will, according to the principles of a mysterious policy, and in consequence of secret and dangerous impeachments unknown to the condemned. Thus the mandates of superiors must be blindly followed, to escape the fruits of their vengeance. (3.) Paul III. granted the order a power 1543, to alter, abrogate or add to their statutes, as time, places and circumstances might require, and that all such changes should be considered, as if they had been specially ratified by the holy See. This grant, which was confirmed 1549, 1682, and 1684, makes them in a great measure independent on the Pope, and greatly increases the power of this spiritual despotism. (4.) Besides the usual members, the society admits men of all ranks and stations, and even of all religions, if they only vow obedience to the General of the order. Men may therefore belong to the order, without its garb, without the vow of poverty or chastity, nay, without being Catholics. (Here our author gives evidence, how Mahometans, Jews and Lutherans have been connected with this order; men of all religions thus subserving the schemes of the order, and, at the same time, by recommendations from them to distant parts, promoting their own interest). Hence disguised Jesuits introduce themselves as travelling governors to young noblemen, as teachers to princes in Protestant courts, and thus deprive the reformed religion of its future supports. Even since the public abolition of this order, they who

† X

belonged

belonged to it, use every underhand art for its re-establishment, and for the destruction of Protestantism, especially in courts and commercial cities. Princes, Emperors, Popes, are ambitious to live and die in an order, whose members, if we may believe the Jesuits, Jesus will welcome at the gates of Heaven. (5.) The power of the General of the order over the persons, wealth, faith, morals, actions of the members is despotic, while he himself is independent of any superior, religious or secular. (6.) They rob other religious orders of their privileges, and assume them to themselves, and almost monopolize in Popish countries the right of publishing editions of books, and thus turn to their account the stupidity of some, and the licentiousness of others, and strengthen their interest by men of the highest talents in every nation. (7.) While all classes of Jesuits, by their vows twice every year solemnly renewed, are bound to the society: the society is under no ties to them, which it cannot, when for its interest, rend asunder. The clause in the vow, *all in the sense which the constitution of the Society prescribes*, joined to the society's absolute power of altering their constitution, demonstrates this.—Their conduct to Spain and Portugal in South America, proves that they scruple not, by art or violence, to change or break any agreement with other societies or individuals. For acquiring wealth, as a chief engine of power, they pervert religion into an instrument of gain, and carry on, by themselves and emissaries, as the Ex-Jesuits still do, an enriching commerce in most parts of the world. For securing the favour of the great, they promise

mise them happiness hereafter, if they assist their designs, notwithstanding the indulgence of their favourite vices. Those who would be shocked by so relaxed a system of morals, they hold in slavery by a dark and gloomy superstition. Thus one ruler dreads the consequences of opposing them: and for removing another, who dares to oppose them, poison or assassination is at hand. France, England, Portugal, yea Popes themselves have felt, with how little scruple the Jesuits thus destroy their enemies. It was therefore a true, though a haughty and inconsiderate boast of a General of their order, that from his cabinet he ruled not only Paris, but China, yea the whole world, without any one knowing how; and it was not without reason that the celebrated Spanish Bishop Melchior Canus foretold, that if men did not timeously resist the Jesuits, a period would come, when all the princes of Europe, would in vain endeavour to resist them. The order, since its abolition by Clement, now formally exists in West Russia; and, even where it seems to be abolished, remains secretly, and repairs its losses, by admitting new members. Many, both in Popish and Protestant states, by the profit they derive from the substance of the order, are interested to defeat the design of Clement's bull. In plans for destroying them, their inward constitution was not sufficiently considered. Their General was imprisoned, without reflecting that he could no longer remain General, and that another must be elected. They were obliged to renounce their garb and names; and it was not recollected, that their rules permit such changes, whenever they are for the interest of the order. Pensions,

bishopricks, prebends, &c. were bestowed on Ex-Jesuits, without considering, that their new situation would give them better advantage to carry on their dangerous designs, unknown and unperceived. In Sweden and Denmark, they have many adherents. In Germany, especially Bavaria, they have acquired amazing influence; and even Protestants interest themselves for them, and subserve their designs. At Rome Pius VI. is their friend. In West Russia, they have a religious establishment, free from the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Mahilow, to which all other religious orders are subjected. In Maryland, they have public colleges and establishments.—Every thing in their plan, tends to its security. The young are from the beginning habituated to a blind obedience to their superiors, without examining the justice of their commands. The order suffers not by the desertion of those in the lower degrees. None are admitted to the higher degrees, before an advanced age, and without full evidence that their cast of mind is thoroughly Jesuitical.

C. 2. The faith accounted necessary by the Jesuits, as appears from Bellarmine, is little more than a professing to believe what the church believes. Hence the Popery, instilled by the Jesuits in Bavaria, &c. is often united with infidelity, and even with atheism. Among the maxims of their abominable morals are, (1.) Probabilism, *i. e.* any action is lawful, and may be done with a good conscience, when its lawfulness is probable: and that is probable, which is accounted so by men in common, by many respectable divines, by a few, or even by one. A man, if he inclines, may prefer an opinion less probable, to another more



more so; and an opinion accounted probable by another, to that which he accounts so himself.

(2.) That is only a sin in a philosophic, not in a theological sense, or so as to expose to God's vengeance, which is committed without knowing God, without thinking on God, without a purpose of offending God. (3). The end sanctifies the means; and acts naturally bad, become good,

when their motive is not bad: *e. g.* A son sins not in wishing the death of his father, or rejoicing that he had murdered him, when drunk; if this joy flows from desire of possessing an inheritance, not from hatred of his father. Fr.

Amicus says in his *Cursus Theologicus*, t. 5. Douay 1642, that men are entitled to defend their honour, especially when connected with that of their order, against malicious slanderers, by murdering the slanderer; and that assassination and child-murder are lawful, when they flow from the good motive of preserving character, without attending to the badness of the means.

(4). In witness-bearing, and in engagements, though confirmed by oath, mental reservations, and secretly understanding your words in a different sense from that in which you probably think the person with whom you have to do understands them, is lawful: See Stolz *Tribunal Pœnitentiæ*, published Bamberg, 1756, with the approbation of the superiors of the order. John de Dicastillo *de justitia et jure*, l. 2. tr. 1. disp. 6. dub. 1. advises father confessors, when one acknowledges he has sworn a lie, to guard him against future transgressions, by teaching him the art of ambiguous expression, and mental reservations.

C. 3. relates to the form of government in the order, the method of trying the abilities and dispositions of those admitted to it, among whom, only professed Jesuits are acquainted with their secret mysteries.

C. 4. Before the abolition of the Jesuits, their General, provincials, &c. were known, though their plans of gaining and preserving power were kept secret. Now their General and other superiors are invisible, and only a small part of the order know, from whom mandates or permissions originate. The Rosicrucians, almost extinguished before the abolition of the Jesuits, now revived under the mask of free-masonry, are suspected to be guided by the secret influence of the Jesuits, to measures, which may gradually reunite Protestants to the church of Rome. The heads of this revived order are unknown. Though it consists of Protestants as well as Catholics, the last are probably the rulers. In the new Rosicrucian order, there is little resemblance to the pretended old one; but the greatest to the Jesuits. In both orders blind subjection to superiors reigns; and those of the lower classes are mere machines in the hands of their invisible superiors, to carry on their mysterious designs. Both orders aim to promote and avail themselves of the superstition, credulity and folly of men, for subjecting them to a priestly yoke. Hence the extravagant toleration of Papists, pled for by Protestants, while Papists are unwilling to repay that indulgence. Hence Dreycorn, a preacher at Nuremberg, and provincial director of the German society for promoting purity of doctrine, has attempted to vindicate the sacrifice of the mass, the worship of saints,

saints, and the imputation of their merits, in an anonymous book published 1785, and for some time imagined the work of a papist; till several reviews praising the book as a proof of the increase of knowledge among Roman Catholics, the unwary author was hereby instigated to discover himself. Hence, the belief of supernatural powers, conferred by Popish orders, instilled, not only into many of the Rosicrucians, but even into some of the Protestant clergy by the arts of the Jesuits. The Jesuits ascribe their rules to Jesus and the Mother of God: The Rosicrucians to Seraphims and higher intelligences, who enlighten their superiors, who now invisibly direct their order, and at length will appear and make other orders their footstool. As the rules of the Jesuits bend to time and circumstances: So the Rosicrucians change their rules every 10 years, and oftener, if they find it necessary. The Rosicrucians admit men of all religions and ranks, as do the Jesuits: But their lower classes, like those of the Jesuits, are bound to the order; not the order to them. The Jesuits sift the characters of men by auricular confessions, and by secret observers and spies; the Rosicrucians at least by the last.—What shall we say of the secret societies formed since the suppression of the Jesuits, for the pretended union of Catholics and Protestants: An union, from which Popery would reap all the benefit, and Protestants only the glory of submission? A church, whose foundations are the decrees of the council of Trent, infallibility, intolerance, and a hierarchy dangerous to the rights of reason and humanity, can never, on lower terms, wish an union with o-  
ther

ther sects of Christians. Can the society for promoting purity of doctrine, purge themselves from all suspicion of promoting popery, when their provincial director Dreycorn, has attempted vanishing over the distinguishing doctrines of Popery?—The society for religious union planned by Masius, may at first sight appear less suspicious. But, does he not prepare men for Popery, by saying, that none of the three explanations of the Lord's Supper, is contrary to reason or scripture? A favourable sentence for transubstantiation! Under the pay of unknown superiors, he has chosen Leipzig for his residence, where there is a mission of Jesuits, and boasts that he has already gained 20,000 to his reconciling plan; and that many Catholics, disposed to promote this union, have contributed large sums for distributing gratis, some thousand copies of his union book. Now, the Catholics so desirous to promote Masius's plan, are the very men who maintain, that salvation is only to be found in their Church. By union, therefore, they can only mean the return of apostate heretics to the Catholic faith. It is no proof of the honest designs of these pretended friends of concord, that Masius was sworn to reveal their names to no person, not even a prince; and that he expected a time, when those who would not preach according to his book should be deposed. Wisely therefore did the Prussian government refuse admission to a community, whose names and views were unknown, and who, even in petitioning it, discovered their intolerant principles. The multitude of small tracts, which Masius has distributed gratis, and sent even carriage-free to distant parts, shows, what hopes his secret and  
wealthy

wealthy supporters entertain, from his disseminating indifferency to Protestantism. A new agent of this society has appeared at Francfort on the Maine: and accounts from Holland, 2d January 1786, say that there also similar attempts are beginning. They must be simple, though perhaps honest, who are deceived by the invitation to Pope Pius to renounce his triple crown. Meantime, at Vienna and other places, there are zealous Catholics, no way attached to the infallibility, and but little to the supremacy of the Pope: and the Jesuits are more devoted to the General of their order, than to his Holiness.

C. 5. The Jesuits were in so flourishing a condition 1750, that even in England they had ten colleges. Their ambitious designs in Paraguay, and the attempts on the lives of the kings of Portugal and France, procured their banishment first from these kingdoms, then from Spain and several states in Italy, and at length the bull of Clement abolishing their order, 21st July 1773. But, after avenging themselves, by poisoning his Holiness, they appeared with renewed strength under the name of Ex-Jesuits, those of their order who had been imprisoned, being set at liberty by their friend and favourer Pius VI. In their first plan, they had determined, in case of their abolition, to transform themselves into an invisible secret society, till favourable circumstances should permit them again to throw off the mask, and perhaps to appear on the theatre of the world with greater lustre: and for this purpose, when the heads of the order by imprisonment or otherwise were disabled to act, instantly to supply their places by persons formerly appointed, though  
known



known only to the initiated. When Ricci and his assistants were imprisoned at Engelberg, P. Schwartz, had a considerable share in their government. When father Homberg was liberated; with fuller, though still invisible powers, he became their head. In many Popish courts, especially in Germany, under the name of Ex-Jesuits, they are father confessors and tutors to young princes. In the Palatinate, especially the Dutchy of Juliers and Bergs, they are favourably received, teach schools, preach, hear confessions, and have a college more numerous than ever. In Bavaria, they are equally favoured: And, if the house of Bourbon would consent, Pius VI. would instantly restore the order to its former lustre, and reward their zeal for maintaining the Papal hierarchy, and extirpating heresy.—An event, which at first sight seemed unfavourable to the Jesuits, gave them one advantage for promoting indifference to Protestantism. The truly glorious reformation of the Emperor Joseph, so transported with joy many a Protestant, that some even equalled it to that of Luther, and rashly concluded, that there was now little to prevent an union of the two churches. Pleasant dreams were entertained, that by the increase of knowledge and of purity of doctrine in Catholic princes and bishops, every important difference between the two religions would soon be removed. The toleration of Popery resounded from every corner, where Popery had hitherto been mentioned only with abhorrence. As a testimony of love to their honest, though erring brethren, in some places they were allowed to meet for worship in Protestant churches. Like indulgence  
was

was reasonably expected on the other side: the rather, as in many periodical writings, the caution and prudence of Protestants, who opposed these measures, was run down, as breathing an intolerant spirit, dishonourable to so enlightened an age.—In many places, however, the spirit of Popery still appeared. The wise plans of the Emperor were in part baffled. Popish pulpits resounded with lampoons against the Protestants. Popery was praised as the only safe religion. Protestants were in danger of being enthralled by a refined Popery, and again brought under the yoke, which their forefathers had so heroically broken. Professed moderation in Catholics, who daily pray for the exaltation of their church, and the extirpation of heresy, is rather suspicious. Nay, some, in other respects candid and enlightened. *e. g.* Sprenger, so far from denying these designs and endeavours, condemns Protestants as intolerant, who guard others against their secret missions, and arts of gaining proselytes. The rage for converting Protestants, since the pretended æra of the illumination and reformation of the Popish clergy, and the fancied destruction of the Jesuits, hath not expired: though, from a change of circumstances, it appears in a new form, and works with greater delicacy. The Dominicans boast of many secret missionaries in Sweden, Denmark, and Russia; and many, not only of them, but of the Franciscans and Minorites, disguised in different garbs, with secrecy and success, spread their religion in Holland and other Protestant countries. For deceiving the populace, their superstition is nourished and improved. Those who would sin with impunity, find a sure place of refuge

fuge in the bosom of the compassionate Catholic church. The controversies of Protestants are pled as proofs of the necessity of an infallible judge. The great are soothed, by being allowed indulgence of certain favourite vices, and by the priests power of forgiving sin. Their unscripturally damning all not of their communion, is a powerful engine for bringing many into it, especially as Protestants acknowledge that Papists may be saved. Never, however, were these arts more diligently and dexterously plied than by the Ex-Jesuits. Like Proteus, they change themselves into every different shape. They travel as abbés, as secular clergymen, as bishops, as laymen, as merchants, as lovers of arts and sciences: and, for the glory of God, they even appear in Protestant churches, and profess themselves Protestants. They endeavour, by their knowledge of mankind, to insinuate themselves into the confidence of Protestant divines, and learned men, among whom, these deadly foes of Protestantism and free enquiry, have found loud trumpeters of their praise, as the great Leibnitz formerly was. Their seeming merit as to learning, natural history, and education; their extensive correspondence; their journies to all parts; and their influence in procuring favours from princes, which sometimes, when the designs of their order permit, or require, they exert even for Protestants, has procured them esteem from those who have no affection for their religious system. Unwary Protestants they engage to propose plans of union with the church of Rome, as a fence of purity of doctrine against Socinian opinions. Sometimes they avail themselves of the ignorance of men, and the passion in
   
 this

this age for secret societies ; and accustom Protestant members to yield unknown superiors a blind obedience, and to lay aside the use of their reason in religion, and other matters ; that they may thus be prepared for acknowledging human authority in articles of faith, and subjecting themselves to the Papal Hierarchy. Indeed, Papists openly boast of the zeal of these faithful friends and servants of the Bishop of Rome. Thus the Cologne Gazette, which is known to be under the influence of the Jesuits, 19th January 1785, relates, that the project of uniting the Greek Church to the Roman, is making great progress at Rome, and, to the honour of this undertaking, is ascribed to the Jesuits in the Russian states. From their friend Murr's journal, vol. 13. it appears, that, for making proselytes with greater safety and speed, they have begun, by disguising their principles, to get in among the Greek clergy. With still greater zeal, they exert themselves to restore Protestant provinces to the Church of Rome. For this purpose, they talk of the use of philosophy in religion, commend forbearance and toleration, and publish rational illustrations of Popery, that it may less stumble ; in which Sailer the Ex-Jesuit has been peculiarly successful. They sometimes honour Protestants with the name of brethren, and extol some of them, whose merit is real, or whose influence is extensive. Though the essential doctrines of Popery are contained in Sailer's Devotions for Catholic Christians, they are veiled in mystic expressions of popular Protestant writers ; and the words Pope, transubstantiation, purgatory, indulgences, &c. are carefully avoided. Hence this book has had an

uncommon run, not among Papists, but among Protestants, to which the circular letters of the honest and unsuspicious Lavater to his friends have considerably contributed. When this book is secretly distributed gratis by Lavater, and others, and used in their devotions by well-meaning Protestants, Popish principles will be instilled gradually, and unperceived; and, from the new form in which they appear, the unwary will forget, that in every thing essential, they remain the same. Such is the influence of concealed directors of certain secret societies, that even Protestant teachers have recommended the intolerant and bigoted Jesuit Storchenaus's philosophy of reason. To pave the way for Popery in America, the Ex-Jesuits there, have endeavoured to persuade the Episcopalians not to renew their application to Britain for consecrating those whom they have chosen bishops, but to apply to the Catholic prelates in France.

P. 157. Note 1. Our author transcribes a remarkable passage from Helvetius de l'Homme, sect. 4. c. 21. " There is only one case, where  
 " toleration may be highly hurtful to a nation.  
 " That case is, when a nation tolerates an intolerant religion; and such a religion is the Catholic. When that religion becomes powerful, it will shed the blood of its thoughtless protectors, and, as a serpent, poison the bosom which cherished it. The interest of German Princes tempts them to Popery, as affording beneficial offices to their families and friends. When they embrace Popery, they will constrain their subjects to embrace it also: and if for this purpose they must shed human blood,  
 " human



“ human blood they will shed. The torches of  
 “ superstition and intolerance yet smoke. A  
 “ small breath may again blow them up, and set  
 “ all Europe in flames. And where will the  
 “ conflagration end? That I know not. Shall  
 “ Holland be safe? Shall Britain flatter herself  
 “ with bidding defiance to the rage of Catholics?  
 “ Let not Protestants be blinded by the flattery  
 “ of their foes. The priest who in Prussia treats  
 “ intolerance as abominable, and a burying the  
 “ laws of God and Nature : in France considers  
 “ toleration as a crime and heresy. Why, in these  
 “ countries, are the sentiments of men of the  
 “ same religion so different and contradictory?  
 “ It is owing to their weakness in Prussia, and  
 “ their strength in France. Shall the nations  
 “ never become wise through former misfor-  
 “ tunes, and lay to heart the necessity of chain-  
 “ ing fanaticism, and banishing intolerance?”  
 So judged Helvetius of Popery, though himself  
 a Catholic.

P. 175. The learned and truly respectable Cru-  
 sius, thus expressed himself twenty years ago, in  
 his German exposition of the Revelations, p. 59.  
 “ Your security, when danger is so near, is la-  
 “ mentable. He, who mentions his apprehen-  
 “ sions of Popery, is generally answered, *There*  
 “ *is nothing to fear : the Pope is no more regarded*  
 “ *as heretofore.* But, let it be remembered, that  
 “ the Church of Rome, has renounced none of  
 “ her errors and corruptions. Nay rather, since  
 “ the Reformation, by the decrees of the council  
 “ of Trent, she has made them unalterable. Po-  
 “ pery too, has acquired by the order of the Je-  
 “ suits, a new support, perhaps more powerful  
 Y 2 “ than

“ than all the rest united. It matters not, there-  
 “ fore, that the government of the Church has  
 “ become less monarchical and more aristocratic,  
 “ though the pretensions of Monarchy, and the  
 “ claims of subjection to it remain. The dimi-  
 “ nished authority of the Pope, and the increas-  
 “ ed power of the bishops, as representatives of  
 “ the Church, conclude not, that the hazard of  
 “ Popery is lessened.”

P. 176. These jealousies to Protestants, who  
 scarce see before their feet, must appear ill-ground-  
 ed : and to men, little acquainted with the Pa-  
 pal hierarchy and arts of Jesuitism, excessive. Bi-  
 goted Catholics exclaim against these suspicions,  
 as the clamours of intolerance, tending to pro-  
 duce distrust and contention. To these last, Ni-  
 colai has well replied, *Untersuchung, &c. i. c.*  
*Examination of the accusations of Garve, p. 135.*  
 “ Papists will not renounce their harsh senti-  
 “ ments of us, as rebels against the alone saving  
 “ faith, except we acknowledge their unscriptu-  
 “ ral and irrational tenets, as better than indeed  
 “ they are. They demand for themselves that  
 “ full toleration which they will not yield to us.  
 “ They charge us with intolerance, because we  
 “ condemn their false doctrines, choose not to  
 “ give them the possession of our churches, and  
 “ are attentive to their secret arts of making pro-  
 “ felytes. They must therefore be told, that we  
 “ view with abhorrence their schemes for de-  
 “ stroying our inestimable religion ; that we put  
 “ no confidence in men, who give us so just  
 “ cause for distrust ; that we will never found our  
 “ faith on vain traditions, on absurd decrees of  
 “ councils, or on the authority of a pretended  
 “ infallible

“ infallible church; and that we will resist every  
 “ man, and body of men, who would hinder us  
 “ in these free enquiries, and protestations a-  
 “ gainst error and spiritual despotism, from  
 “ whence our forefathers derived their honour-  
 “ able name. These considerations move me to  
 “ paint Popery as it really is, and to warn the  
 “ Protestant public against whatever may hazard  
 “ its return, though by means indirect and slow  
 “ in their approach, that they may not be lulled  
 “ asleep by the specious pretences of peace and  
 “ brotherly love.”

P. 183—376. contain vouchers of the facts in the preceding narration.

The first, p. 183—196, is an account of the present state of the Jesuits in Russia, translated into German from the Warsaw Gazette, 26th July 1785.—The account states, that blind obedience to the Pope is due only in matters of faith, not of church discipline; and that therefore, even persons afterwards canonized, disregarded Papal bulls as to the abolition of religious orders. Yet Stanislaus Czerniewiecz, Vice Provincial of the Jesuits at Polozk in White Russia, carried his obedience so far, as to petition the Czarina, that the Jesuits there might be allowed to comply with the Pope's bull abolishing their order. She however refused to accept the bull, and decreed, that the order in White Russia should not be in the least changed. When this was known, many Jesuits from the most distant parts repaired thither, to serve their own order; and the great Catharine, who, though they had been only a few months in her dominions, knew their worth and importance, viz. by the cession of White

Y. 3,

Russia

Russia from Poland. Though the order was perfectly restored there, yet for six years it admitted no noviciates: till a permission was granted by the bishop of White Russia, January 1779, who had been authorized to act as Apostolical delegate for that purpose by a commission from Pius VI., 15th August 1778. Afterwards the Jesuits assembled, 17th October 1782, in virtue of an edict of the Czarina, and elected Stanislaus general Vicar, with the full power of a General. On his death, after he had held the office two years and nine months, by his signed manual he nominated (according to the practice of the Jesuits' General) Gabriel Lenkiewicz, as his successor, till a new convention and election. The account concludes with these remarkable words. "He now rules his order, which stands, as has been said, on one firm foundation, (meaning the protection of the Russian government) and on another, yet firmer, of which to-day is not the season for speaking publicly and particularly."

The second paper, p. 197—220, is an extract from a letter first published in the Berlin monthly Journal, January 1785. The writer's business having led him to spend near three months in Swabia and different provinces adjacent to the Rhine, and to converse with men of all ranks, he learned with astonishment, that Popery, even of the grossest kind, gained ground in not a few Protestant states. Disguised Dominicans in Sweden, Denmark, and Russia, and Franciscans and Minorites in lay habits in Holland, are successful in gaining proselytes: not to mention Jesuits, who appear every where, and in every dress.

Laymen

Laymen, and even preachers in Germany, who profess themselves Protestants, are secretly Papists, and some of them Jesuits, and have the Pope's dispensation for thus dissembling. To Protestants zealously attached to revealed religion, they talk of the danger of free-thinking and damnable heresies, and the importance of good Christians cultivating brotherly love, and uniting against the common enemy. They encourage fanaticism, mysticism, and placing all religion in feelings, as this paves the way for the understanding being easily deceived. Candid and honest Protestants, suspect no evil from men, who talk in so affectionate a strain. When they declaim against cold criticisms, unedifying controversy, and dry philosophy, as hindering vital piety : men are prepared for entering into societies, where blind fanaticism is esteemed an excellency, and the use of reason deemed a temptation of the devil. To these they have the easiest access, who have adopted Laver's ideas, that miraculous powers are still to be obtained by the prayer of faith. Pious simplicity forbids suspecting tenets inculcated with unction, and incapacitates for bringing them to the bar of reason and scripture. Men of this cast, are gradually informed, that many things important in religion, not clearly contained in scripture, must be learned from what tradition hath transmitted to us of the faith and holiness of the first Christians, by returning to which, we may acquire their extraordinary gifts. At length they are told, that a secret society hath subsisted from the earliest times, in possession of these traditions and miraculous powers. Thus was an honest, but weak deacon abused, and asked and gained admission to the  
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boasted society. In two years, at a general meeting, after much prayer and fasting, he was told, that though the gifts of the Spirit in the Protestant churches, were sufficient for the ordinary faith of Christians, those only who were duly consecrated priests, could attain the knowledge of the secrets of nature, and a power over nature. The Catholic church alone possessed this power of consecration in an uninterrupted succession from the apostles. He might receive this consecration from a Popish bishop, as others had done, without renouncing Protestantism: and thus would serve even Protestants, for he would lose nothing which he had before, and by this regular consecration would acquire new powers. The well-meaning deacon was accordingly consecrated; fancied, that he now felt unusual spiritual influence in dispensing the Lord's Supper; hoped for usefulness, both among Catholics, with whom he was connected by his secret consecration, and among Protestants, to whom he belonged by his public office; and flattered himself with the idea of uniting the two religions, in which every mean was used to strengthen him. At length, an unforeseen incident awakened him from his dream. He was not the only Protestant in the place, who had been allured to this secret order, with whom, however, different arts had been used, according to their different characters and circumstances, none knowing what had passed with another. Some of the most discerning had mutually imparted to one another their complaints and doubts, and disclosed the different manner in which they had been conversed with. Not however openly declaring their sentiments, they resolved to wait  
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till they saw what was like to be the issue of these proceedings. At last, at an extraordinary meeting of some chosen members, after an artful introduction, they were told, that their superiors had ordered, that every member of the society should wear a badge on his naked breast, that on certain occasions they might know one another. These badges were distributed, and were images of Mary, surrounded with magic characters. Here, patience forsook a generous young man, who had long concealed his displeasure. He openly told the director, that the superiors had performed none of the pompous promises, which they had so often repeated: and that this new badge increased just grounds of suspicion, that impure designs were concealed. He then with great earnestness addressed the deacon, if he was not ashamed, as a Protestant preacher, to give way to follies that favoured so strongly of Popery. The deacon, though a weak, was an honest man; and acknowledged, that this image of the Virgin always appeared to him improper, and that he did not well know what it meant. The eloquent director argued the will of their wise and enlightened superiors, and that the image was symbolical of the powers imparted by consecration over virgin earth. But, all availed not. The dissatisfied spoke so loud and plain, that the assembly broke up in considerable disorder. And now, the subtle directors privately addressed the complainers, arguing, promising and threatening. They particularly laboured to gain the deacon, whose exemplary life gave him great influence. But, by this time, the scales had fallen from his eyes. He reviewed with shame and regret, his inconsiderate

derate conduct for two years past ; and yet, knew not how to get free of his unhappy connexion. His anguish and perplexity threw him into a fever, in the violence of which, he discovered many things to his friends, which he would otherwise have concealed. His relations observed with surprise the tonsure on his head, and a number of very suspicious correspondences among his papers. After his recovery, he was asked the meaning of these things. By the severe shock he had sustained, his blood was cooled, and dreaming imagination began to give place to understanding, and he acknowledged and lamented to his friends a part of his follies.

P. 221—312, contain a letter to Biester, intended as a confutation of the above narrative, with Biester's reply. There is little in the letter, except shuffling, bad language, a denial of one or two facts, and a challenge to prove others. The reply, which is full of useful information, begins, p. 249. That the Romish court have ever endeavoured openly or secretly to bear down and destroy all, who reject their doctrine and hierarchy; and that the Jesuits have been, and still are, their most faithful assistants in these efforts: are facts which need no proof. By the system which they would establish, the Pope being the infallible head of the church, the doctrines which he maintains must be articles of faith. Now the tendency of these doctrines may be judged, from what the Popes have done, agreeably to them, in all ages. All that has been thus done, by different Popes and in different ages, must be considered as one unrevoked, yea irrevocable system. Indeed, in most of their conduct, one spirit has been.

been abundantly visible. Many worthy and humane Catholics, start back from some parts of this system. But doth not the Romish court still teach, and, as far as she can, practise conformably to them? Could she revoke them, without acknowledging that her system admitted of changes, and consequently was not infallible? What then must be expected, if Pope and Jesuits succeed in obtaining universal dominion? To prevent mens seeing with their own eyes, the Pope ordained, that no layman who reads or possesses the bible, though in a Catholic translation, without the permission of his bishop, shall have forgiveness of sins, till he have delivered up the bible to the person who has the care of his soul. See Conc. Trident. sub finem Regulæ X. de libris prohibitis. Reg. 4. ap. Harduini Concilia, t. 10. p. 208. The annual excommunication of Lutherans in Cœna Domini, or Maunday-Thursfday, is well known. For punishing excommunicated heretics, *i. e.* all non-Catholics, the Pope instituted the tribunal of the Inquisition, where processes are carried on with the utmost secrecy. See Card. de Luca in Relatione Curiz Romanæ, Disc. xiv. p. 49. Gregory XIII. celebrated the treacherous and cruel Paris massacre by festivals, medals and processions. See Pagi Annales. Pope Innocent VIII. by a rescript 1486, enjoined the Magistrates at Brescia, under pain of excommunication, within six days after they were required, to execute the sentences of the Inquisition against heretics, without examining the processes, or admitting any appeal. See Bullarium Magnum, tom. 1. p. 440. Cardinals, Romish courtiers, and especially Jesuits, have openly taught, without any censure from  
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the Pope, that it is just to put heretics to death, and that obstinate heretics should be burnt alive, not from cruelty, but that they may renounce their obstinacy. See the Jesuit Silvester Petrafoneta Notæ in ep. Malinæi ad Baltzacum, Antw. 1634, p. 130.—Bishops at their consecration swear fidelity to the Pope, that they will discover to none the counsel he delivers to them, defend his rights against all men, discover as soon as they can any designs against him, and pursue (or persecute) to the utmost of their power all heretics. See Pontificale Romanum Clementis VIII. jussu editum, Antwerp 1627, p. 59.—So far are the Popes from allowing appeals from their sentences to secular princes, that Paul II. formerly Æneas Sylvius, declared those ipso facto excommunicated, who should appeal from the Pope to a future council. See Bullarium Magnum, t. 1. p. 369. Alexander VI. gifted to Spain lands of an unmeasurable extent, and whose existence he knew not. See Bullarium Magnum, t. 1. p. 454.—Paul III. declared Henry VIII. deprived of his kingdom for his heresy, and that his posterity should not only be incapable of obtaining his or any other dignity or possession, but, as infamous persons, should not be admitted to bear witness.—The decree of the parliament of Paris, against Jo. Chastell, who intended to murder, and actually wounded Henry IV. of France, was in the year 1664 placed in the Index of Prohibited Books. See Lamoignon's opera, tom. 5. part. 1. p. 280. ed. Colon. 1731.—Innocent X. protested, that the peace of Westphalia, and oaths of Popish princes to preserve it, were null and void, and that no right should be acquired even by the longest and most undisturbed possession



possession in consequence of it. Missionaries are sent, though with the greatest secrecy, for recovering to the Catholic faith, those who have revolted from it, under the direction of the congregation de propaganda fide at Rome, where instructors of the greatest abilities, train up young men for missionaries, provide them with instructions, defray their charges, correspond with them; oversee a press, where books are published in the languages of the different countries which they wish to convert; form and execute plans, for gaining over princes and men of influence; and secretly erect seminaries in Protestant countries. See Card. de Luca Relat. Disc. xxiii. p. 71. Gregory XIII. instituted a variety of such seminaries. See Pagi Annales 1573, Tom. vi. p. 736. How far these secret missions are now carried, chiefly under the conduct of Jesuits, appears from many new books, particularly Nicolai's travels, and most of our periodical papers. So certain are facts, which Mr T——y declares impossible.—Mr T——y thinks it incredible, that a favour for Popery should be instilled into Protestant princes. But, have not such attempts been formerly made with success? I appeal to the history of France, where murder and sedition were employed for frightening princes from Protestantism: of England, where zeal for Popery cost James II. his crown: of Sweden, where John II. secretly became Catholic; where his successor Sigismund, contrary to his coronation-oath, endeavoured to introduce Popery, and on that account was deposed; and where Christiana was perverted to the Church of Rome: of Russia, where Demetrius endeavoured to intro-

duce Popery : of Germany, where, contrary to their true interest, the Electors Palatine, and of Saxony, the princes of Hesse Cassel, Baden, Hesse Rheinfels, &c. renounced Protestantism. Disguised Jesuits, in different offices which give them access to Princes, have been most successful in this work. It was thus that a favour for Popery was first instilled into Frederic Augustus, afterwards king of Poland. His mother discovered the characters and views of some in his train, and warned him against them, but in vain. In his travels through Italy, they artfully availed themselves of seemingly unsought-for occasions, to impress him with their miracles and legendary tales. Busching relates this on the authority of P. de Antoniis, a Jesuit at Lyons, *Beytrage zu lebensgeschichte dencwardiger personen*, th. ii. p. 231. Of this zeal for making proselytes, he gives other instances, *ib.* p. 100. and 202. Why then should it seem a thing incredible, that the Romish Court should practise the same arts as heretofore, and with equal success?—Mr T——y declares it equally absurd, that Protestant preachers should be secretly Papists, nay even Jesuits. It is, however, well known, that missionaries appear in every form, and that Protestant youths, perverted by them, conceal their change of religion, when they return to their own countries. Nay, that many young students in Denmark and Norway, thus perverted, having obtained ordination as orthodox Lutherans, gradually endeavour, in sermons and confessions, to instil into the people of their charge Popish principles. See Pontoppidan's *Annales Ecclesiæ Danicæ*, theil. iii. p. 554, 611, 727, and theil. iv. p. 56, who mentions

tions the royal edicts occasioned by this treachery. Why may not what hath happened in Denmark, happen also in Germany?——It is not laudable, that many great works are published, seemingly written in a known language, yet, where different ideas from the common ones, are connected with the words. Nay, works are published in a sort of cypher style, in which good friends publickly communicate some things one to another, from one end of the world to another, in a language which only they who have the key of the cypher understand: possibly for furthering the projects of a set of designing men. See *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*, Vol. lii. 1. p. 144, and *Gottingisches Magazin*. Jahrgang 3. stück. 4. p. 591.——Mr T——y demands the name of the Protestant Deacon. The concealing it is proper, as, if divulged, the good man might fall into contempt with his people, and his usefulness be utterly ruined.

The fourth paper, p. 313—376, is a Letter to the Brethren, especially the Protestants of his circle, written by one who had attained the highest degree in the circle of the order to which he belonged, and had read all the written instructions and printed books recommended by the order. Some of the most remarkable particulars follow.——Our order began in Catholic countries. The highest superiors are Catholics. At our meetings, reason is run down, and the brethren are exhorted to content themselves with dark conceptions of religion. A certain secret society, whose connexion with our order I know, take an oath to speak or write nothing against the faith of the brethren of the cross; which oath,

many Protestant members, without enquiring who these brethren of the cross are, have inconsiderately taken. I know brethren among us, of great influence, inclined to Popery, and who correspond with Popish countries. By the injunction of unknown superiors, Storchenau's *Philosophie der religion*, 7 bande, Augsburg, a book full of dark Popish ideas, was recommended. Such an order would have been impossible, had these superiors been true Protestants. Thus we are directed to the work of a Jesuit brother, in which every Protestant, as an heretic, is consigned to damnation: and yet Chrysophiron, a Protestant preacher, recommends this book in his circle. A blind obedience to superiors is the first thing inculcated on young members of our order, just as in Popish monastic orders. When the director of a circle reads any thing as the order of his superior, all the brethren, without further examination, must obey; their decrees being considered as infallible. Thus we freely give to men unknown, an entire power over our persons and conduct; and a blind faith and obedience, opposite to the first principles of Protestantism, and favourable to Popery, is inculcated. No brother knows any proceedings except those in his own circle. Every brother knows only the director of his own circle: and commonly, even the director only knows his next superior. Letters are sent them in a circular way, which they know, by their signature, come from their higher superiors, though the names denoted by these signatures they ordinarily know not. They who suspect and disapprove, think they have gone too far to retire with safety; and, for avoiding the consequences, which have sometimes

times followed the displeasure of powerful members of the order, remain silent. The history of the Deacon may therefore be true, though T—y knows it not: for what is done in one circle, is not known to another. Profelyte-making may be carried a length at the banks of the Rhine, for which circles here need further preparation.— You will ask, Is my revealing these things consistent with my engagement to keep the secrets of my order? I reply: These engagements, rashly taken, cannot dissolve my prior obligations to the cause of God, of religion, of humanity, of my country.—All the money given to the directors for admission into the different degrees in a circle, is sent to unknown superiors: and, as there are more than 7000 of our order, the sums sent must be considerable, though one would think, unnecessary for men who know the philosopher's stone, the universal medicine, &c. Despise not the counsel of an unknown brother, who exhorts you to think and choose for yourselves, and doth not, like your unknown superiors, demand your money, and your blind obedience.

Along with this work, is published a German translation of *Privata Monita*, and *Secreta Monita Societatis Jesu*. Never was there devised a more subtle plan for gaining wealth, power, and influence, under the pretence of humility and disinterestedness: for availing themselves of men's weaknesses and vices, to make them subservient to the designs of their order: for bribing the servants and confidants of the great, that they may learn their secrets, or secure their favour: for alluring young men of ability to their order: for rendering life and connexion with them uneasy.



to brethren who discover disapprobation of their ambitious and covetous plans, and either forcing such by harsh treatment to leave them, or finding a pretext, from their complaints, for expelling them: for ruining, to the utmost of their power, the characters of those who have been expelled from their order, or have voluntarily deserted it, and for employing spies to watch their conduct: for raising differences among princes; sometimes, that they may have, with both parties, the merit of reconciling them; sometimes, that they may gain the favour of the prince whose cause they befriend: and for promoting the advancement into high and beneficial offices of those friendly to their designs.——Evidences are given, in an introduction, of the authenticity of these papers, with which, however, only a small number in the order are acquainted, in whose secrecy and caution they fully confide: so that on their being published, such who knew not of them might swear that they had no such rules, yea, that they had rules opposite to these.

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The truth of the more ancient facts, in the cursory account of modern Jesuitism, of which the above is an abstract, is sufficiently authenticated, and generally known. The books referred to in proof of facts of a later date, I have not had access to see. Stark has commenced a process against his original accusers. Lavater and others have denied the charges against them. Masius in his *Anticatholicismus*, Cothen 1787, endeavours to defend himself from the charge of Popery. He observes that no succeeding Pope has abrogated, and that all of them with opportunity  
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and power of acting agreeably to Gregory VII's decree, that the Pope can absolve subjects from their oath of allegiance : and that Benedict XIII. by canonizing Gregory VII. A. D. 1728, virtually confirmed his decree. He intimates, that the charge against him by Nicolai and other pretended modern reformers, was a false alarm, designed to conceal the true danger of Popery, from their own writings, in which the authority of the sacred oracles is undermined. I wish I was equally convinced that Mafius, as I am that Nicolai has no friendship for Popery. Though Popery may find its account in the objections which Socinians and Christian Deists have raised as to the canon and inspiration of Scripture : men of such discernment as Nicolai, Biefter, &c. would not willingly contribute to the prevalence of a religion, which, if it had power, at least under Jesuit influence, would persecute them to the death. Schneider of Eifenach, in the preface to the first volume of his Acts and Records, thinks, that the greatest danger of the church is from men, who, while they excite ill-grounded apprehensions of Popery, endeavour to substitute, instead of Christianity, mere natural religion. That the most apparent and visible danger in Germany, is from Socinianism and Deism, I allow. That this is the greatest danger, I doubt. Many of the pretended reformers, are fair and open enemies. By Scripture criticism, and especially by reason and ridicule, they assault the faith once delivered to the saints : and by Scripture and reason, sometimes seasoned with a juster ridicule, the orthodox repel their attacks. The spirit of Jesuits inclines, and their principles allow, aiming at their foe,  
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the arrows of death, without warning him to stand on his defence. Destruction that wasteth at noon-day, may be perceived, and sometimes bravely and successfully resisted. The secret approaches of the pestilence that walketh in darkness, are not discerned, till opposing them becomes impossible. I have seen none of the books referred to by Schneider in support of his sentiments, except an extract from Dreycorn's account of the German Society for promoting purity of doctrine and true piety. *Act. hist. eccl. nostri temporis*, 10 band. p. 769. and Urlsperger's defence of himself and that society, inserted in the same book, 12 band. p. 769. I desire to think favourably of the intentions of Dr Urlsperger. I lament with him that the true light of Christianity, if not extinguished, is much obscured, in a great part of the Protestant Church. But I apprehend, he rejoices, without proper evidence, that God is elsewhere repairing that loss by the light arising among the Catholics. A reformed Popery in the writings of Jesuits, probably intends the proselyting those of other communions, rather than instructing those of their own. Light hath indeed shined in darkness, by the publications of some honest and enlightened Prelates and Priests. But darkness alarmed, uses every effort to exclude or quench that light. A society for promoting gospel faith and holiness, to which Papists are admitted, may add to the proofs, that a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump.

## N U M B E R XI.

*Proofs that Original Sin was taught before Augustine.  
Taken partly from Hagelmayer's German Answer  
to Free-Thoughts on Christianity, partly from the  
Hague Prize Essays, in answer to Dr Priestley's  
History of the Corruptions of Christianity.*

**J**USTIN MARTYR Quæst. et Resp. ad Græc. p. 213. We die through the disobedience of one man. We are made alive through the obedience of one man. Dialogue with Trypho, No. 94, 95, p. 315, 316. of the Benedictine edition, says, that Jesus was born and crucified on account of the human race, who, through Adam, fell under subjection to death, and the deceit of the serpent, besides the evil chargeable on every one on his own account. Ib. No. 23. Christ had no need of circumcision; for by the will of the Father, he was born without sin, from a Virgin descended from Abraham. Ib. No. 88. Christ needed not to be baptized, for he was not a sinner.

Irenæus, l. 5. c. 16. We offended God in the first Adam, not performing his precept. In the second Adam we are reconciled, being become obedient to death. Ib. c. 34. The human race was smitten in the first Adam, in whom it had transgressed. Ib. l. 3. c. 20. In Adam we lost the image of God, were overcome by disobedience, and made subject to sin. See also l. 3. c. 31.

Theophilus of Antioch ad Autolycum, l. 2. p. 101. Man would not have become mortal, had he remained faithful to God.

Tertullian

Tertullian asserts a common sentence of condemnation on mankind through Adam; *de anima* l. 40, and *de pœnitentia* c. 2. Passages in these writers which seem unfavourable to the doctrine of original sin, flowed from their defending the freedom of the will, and the goodness of human nature as it came from God, against those who sought the origin of evil in matter, and ascribed the creation of man, not to the Supreme God, but to an inferior, and some of them to an evil principle.

Clemens of Alexandria, *Strom.* l. 3. p. 469. endeavours, by an allegorical interpretation, to get rid of the argument from *Pf.* li. for original sin, and argues the absurdity of that doctrine, much as the Pelagians afterwards did. This however shows, that this doctrine was then believed. In *Pædagog.* l. 3. c. 10. he seems to have believed it. The Logos alone is impeccable. To sin, is native and common to all men.

Origen *homil.* 12. in *Levit.* p. 252. Christ alone among all men was so born, as to derive from his parents no sinful infection. *Hom.* 8. in *Lev.* No child is free from sin, if he was but a day old. *Hom.* 14. in *Lev.* Little children must obtain forgiveness of sin in baptism, seeing they are born sinners. *Contra Celsum*, l. 4. No. 40. The wings of the soul are cut, so that it is hindered to pursue the path of virtue, and mount up to the Deity. In the same book he asserts, that the curse which affected Adam, extends to all his posterity.

From the sentiments of Chrysostome, those of earlier writers cannot be inferred. Yet Vossius. *hist. Pel.* l. 2. part. 1. thes. 6. § 5. cites him as asserting



serting that Adam had subjected all mankind to condemnation.

British and German divines, who pronounce the doctrine of original sin absurd, would do well to confute President Edwards's answer to Dr Taylor, and Dr Seiler's defence of that doctrine, at the end of his German treatise on the atonement.

## N U M B E R XII.

### *Observations on the Song of the Bards over Cuchullin.*

**C**ERTAIN characters, which, the ingenious Bishop Hurd observes, were common to the Heroic and Gothic times, appear in Ossian's Poems. Such as, Military enthusiasm. Battles minutely described. Robbery honourable. Bastardy no discredit. Savage fierceness joined to generosity, hospitality, courtesy, attachment to the unfortunate, especially those of their own clan. Praise highly valued, and Poets much encouraged.

Perhaps most of these characters concur in every period where society is in its infancy; and therefore are insufficient to ascertain the period when Ossian flourished. M'Pherson conjectures, that Ossian might have seen the Christians whom Dioclesian's persecution had driven beyond the pale of the Roman empire. Whether he did or not, I think it evident he must have seen translations of some poems in the Old Testament, or at least have heard them repeated. I am led to this conclusion by Bishop Hurd's characters of imitation.

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When a cluster of sentiments or images are applied in two writers to the same subject, it is not to be doubted that one has copied the other, especially when we find the same disposition of the parts, and that too a disposition in no common form. Identity of expression, especially if carried on through an entire sentence, is a certain proof of imitation. Nay, an imitation is discoverable, when there is the least particle of the original expression, by a peculiar and no very natural arrangement of words. The same pace and train of expression does not usually spring from nature, which, when the sentiment is the same, has a hundred ways of giving it to us. When the passages glanced at are not familiar, the expression is frequently minute and circumstantial, corresponding to the original, in the order, turn, and almost number of the words: for the imitated passage not being known, the imitator may give it as he finds it, with safety, or at least without offence.

Such resemblances I find betwixt the song of the Bards over Cuchullin, in the poem on the death of Cuchullin, p. 152. 154. of Ossian's Fingal; and David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. 1. chap.

(1). Ossian. Where hadst thou been, when the mighty fell? The mighty have fallen in battle, and thou wast not there. The mighty are dispersed at Temora.—In David, How are the mighty fallen? v. 19. v. 25. and v. 27.

(2). Ossian. Let none tell it in Selma, nor in Mervin's woody land. Fingal will be sad, and the sons of the desert mourn.—David, v. 20. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of  
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of Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.—Here the imitation appears in the order, turn, and almost number of the words. Chance could hardly produce such a singular mode of expression and arrangement of a sentence in two writers.

(3.) Ossian. Thy path in the battle was terrible: the steps of death were behind thy sword.—David. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan\* turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty.

(4.) Ossian. Thy strength was like the strength of a storm, thy speed like the eagle's wings.—David. They were swifter than eagles: they were stronger than lions.

Though the other instances of imitation are not so striking as the 2d, and, if picked out of large volumes, might have been accidental coincidences, yet I think they ought not to be overlooked, as they are all in two short elegies, where it is natural to suppose, the reading or remembering the one, may have occasioned the peculiar cast of thought and expression in the other.

Michaelis of Gottingen, not. 69. on Lowth *De Sacra Poesi*, observes, that it is peculiar to the Jewish poets, to insert, in the middle of a poem, another poem more striking and lofty, compared with which, the rest of the poem might seem prose; which they suppose to be sung, after the manner of their nation, by their poets, or singing women. See *Isaiah*, xxvi. 1.; xxvii. 2. *Jeremiah*, ix. 16.—20. *Ezek.* xxxii. 2. In this way, we are brought, as it were, to witness the

victories or disasters, and to hear the triumphal songs or lamentations of former times. The bards' song over Cuchullin, inserted in the poem on the death of Cuchullin, is in this taste. I would not, I allow, infer imitation from this mode of composition, which possibly ignorance of other countries and ages is the reason of fancying peculiar to Judea. It seems, however, an evidence of the genuineness of the poem, as the taste of our modern poets is different; and this air of Eastern antiquity, probably never occurred to Macpherson. But, though I cannot believe the poem forged, I can much less believe, with some of its warm admirers, that it is superior to Homer, Virgil, or Milton. This seems to me as great an absurdity in taste, as it would be in mathematics, to assert, that a point was greater than a surface.

### N U M B E R XIII.

*Extracts from an Alphabetical Compendium of the various Christian Sects, by HANNAH ADAMS, Boston, 1784.*

**F**ROM this work a few articles are selected, as to the opinions and usages of different religious sects in the American states.

HOPKINTONIANS, or HOPKINSIANS, so called from the Rev. Mr Samuel Hopkins, pastor of the first congregational church at Newport; who, in his sermons and tracts has made several additions to the sentiments first advanced by

by the celebrated Mr Jonathan Edwards, late President of New-Jersey College.

The following is a summary of the distinguishing tenets of this denomination, together with a few of the reasons of which they make use to support their sentiments :

I. That all true *virtue*, or real *holiness*, consists in *disinterested benevolence*.

The object of benevolence is universal Being, including God, and all intelligent creatures ; it wishes and seeks the good of every individual so far as consistent with the greatest good of the whole, which is comprised in the glory of God, and the perfection and happiness of his kingdom.

The law of God is the standard of all moral rectitude, or holiness. \* This is reduced into loving God, and loving our neighbour as ourselves ; and universal good-will comprehends all the love to God, our neighbour and ourselves, required in the Divine law ; and therefore must be the whole of holy obedience. Let any serious person think, what are the particular branches of true piety : when he has viewed each one by itself, he will find, that disinterested, friendly affection, is its distinguishing characteristic. For instance, all the holiness in pious fear, which distinguishes it from the fear of the wicked, consists in *love*. Again, holy gratitude is nothing but good-will

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\* The law requires us to love God with all our hearts, because he is the Lord, because he is just such a being as he is. On this account, primarily and antecedently to all other considerations, he is infinitely amiable ; and therefore, on this account, primarily and antecedently to all other considerations, ought he to appear infinitely amiable in our eyes.



to God and our neighbour, in which we ourselves are included ; and correspondent affection excited by a view of the good-will and kindness of God.

Universal good-will also, implies the whole of the duty we owe to our neighbour. For justice, truth, and faithfulness, are comprised in universal benevolence ; so are temperance and chastity : for, an undue indulgence of our appetites and passions is contrary to benevolence, as tending to hurt ourselves or others ; and so, opposite to the general good, and the Divine command, in which all the crime of such indulgence consists. In short, all *virtue* is nothing but *benevolence* acted out in its proper nature and perfection, or love to God and our neighbour, made perfect in all its genuine exercises and expressions.

II. That all *sin* consists in *selfishness*.

By this is meant an interested, selfish affection, by which a person sets himself up as supreme, and the only object of regard ; and nothing is good or lovely, in his view, unless suited to promote his own private interest. This self-love is in its whole nature and every degree of it, enmity against God. *It is not subject to the law of God ;* and is the only affection that can oppose it. It is the foundation of all spiritual blindness ; and therefore the source of all the open idolatry in the heathen world ; and false religion under the light of the Gospel. All this is agreeable to that self-love which opposes God's true character : under the influence of this principle, men depart from the truth, it being itself the greatest practical lie in nature, as it sets up that which is comparatively nothing, above universal existence. Self-love

love is the source of all the profaneness and impiety in the world ; and of all pride and ambition among men, which is nothing but selfishness acted out in this particular way. This is the foundation of all covetousness and sensuality ; as it blinds peoples eyes, contracts their hearts, and sinks them down, so that they look upon earthly enjoyments as the greatest good. This is the source of all falsehood, injustice, and oppression ; as it excites mankind, by undue methods, to invade the property of others.—Self-love produces all the violent passions, envy, wrath, clamour and evil-speaking : and every thing contrary to the Divine law, is briefly comprehended in this fruitful source of all iniquity, *self-love*.

III. That there are no promises of *regenerating grace* made to the *doings of the unregenerate*.

For as far as men act from self-love, they act from a bad end. For those who have no true love to God, really do no duty, when they attend on the externals of religion : and as the unregenerate act from a selfish principle, they do nothing which is commanded. Their impenitent doings are wholly opposed to repentance and conversion, therefore not implied in the command, To repent, &c. So far from this, they are altogether disobedience to the command. Hence it appears, that there are no promises of salvation to the doings of the unregenerate.

IV. That the impotency of sinners, with respect to believing in Christ, is not natural, but *moral*.

For it is a plain dictate of common sense, that natural impossibility excludes all blame. But an unwilling mind is universally considered as a

crime, and not as an excuse, and is the very thing wherein our wickedness consists. That the impotence of the sinner is owing to a disaffection of heart, is evident from the promises of the Gospel. When any object of good is proposed and promised to us upon asking, it clearly evinces that there can be no impotency in us with respect to obtaining it, besides the disapprobation of the *will*; and that inability which consists in disinclination, never renders any thing improperly the subject of precept or command.

V. That in order to faith in Christ, a sinner must approve in his heart of the Divine conduct, even though God should cast him off for ever; which, however, neither implies *love to misery*, nor *hatred of happiness* \*.

For, if the law is good, death is due to those who have broken it. The Judge of all the earth cannot but do right. It would bring everlasting reproach upon his government to spare us, considered

\* As a particle of water is small in comparison of a generous stream, so the man of humility feels small before the great family of his fellow-creatures. He values his soul; but when he compares it to the great soul of mankind, he almost forgets and loses sight of it: for the governing principle of his heart, is, to estimate things according to their worth. When, therefore, he indulges a humble comparison with his Maker, he feels lost in the infinite fullness and brightness of Divine love, as a ray of light is lost in the sun, and a particle of water in the ocean. It inspires him with the most grateful feelings of heart, that he has opportunity to be in the hand of God, as clay in the hand of the potter: and as he considers himself in this humble light, he submits the nature and size of his future vessel entirely to God. As his pride is lost in the dust, he looks up with pleasure toward the throne of God, and rejoices with all his heart in the rectitude of the Divine administration.

sidered merely as in ourselves. When this is felt in our hearts, and not till then, we shall be prepared to look to the free grace of God through the redemption which is in Christ, and to exercise faith in his blood, *who is set forth to be a propitiation to declare God's righteousness, that he might be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.*

VI. That the infinitely wise and holy God has exerted his omnipotent power in such a manner as he purposed should be followed with the existence and entrance of *moral evil* in the system.

For, it must be admitted on all hands, that God has a perfect knowledge, foresight and view of all possible existences and events: if that system and scene of operation in which moral evil should never have existence, was actually *preferred* in the Divine mind; certainly the Deity is infinitely disappointed in the issue of his own operations. Nothing can be more dishonourable to God, than to imagine that the system, which is actually formed by the Divine hand, and which was made for his pleasure and glory, is, yet, not the fruit of wise contrivance and design.

VII. That the introduction of *sin*, is, upon the whole, for the *general good*.

For, the wisdom and power of the Deity are displayed in carrying on designs of the *greatest good*: and the existence of *moral evil* has undoubtedly occasioned a more full, perfect, and glorious discovery of the infinite perfections of the Divine nature, than could otherwise have been made to the view of creatures. If the extensive manifestations of the pure and holy nature of God, and his infinite aversion to sin, and all his inhe-

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rent perfections, in their genuine fruits and effects, is either itself the greatest good, or necessarily contains it; it must necessarily follow, that the introduction of *sin* is for the *greatest good*.

VIII. That repentance is before faith in Christ.

By this is not intended, that repentance is before a speculative belief of the *being* and *perfections* of God, and of the *person* and *character* of Christ; but only, that true repentance is previous to a saving faith in Christ, in which the believer is united to Christ, and entitled to the benefits of his mediation and atonement. That repentance is before faith in this sense, appears from several considerations.

1. As repentance and faith respect different objects, so they are distinct exercises of the heart, and therefore not only may, but must be prior the one to the other.

2. There may be genuine repentance of sin, without faith in Christ; but there cannot be true faith in Christ, without repentance of sin: and since repentance is necessary in order to faith in Christ, it must necessarily be prior to faith in Christ.

3. John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles taught, that repentance is before faith. John cried, *Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand*; intimating, that true repentance was necessary in order to embrace the gospel of the kingdom. Christ commanded, *Repent ye, and believe the gospel*. And Paul preached *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*.

IX. That though men became sinners by Adam according to a divine constitution, yet they have,



have, and are accountable for no sins but personal. For,

1. Adam's act in eating the forbidden fruit, was not the act of his posterity ; therefore, they did not sin at the same time he did.

2. The sinfulness of that act could not be transferred to them afterwards, because the sinfulness of an act can no more be transferred from one person to another than an act itself. Therefore,

3. Adam's act in eating the forbidden fruit, was not the cause, but only the occasion of his posterity's being sinners. God was pleased to make a constitution, that, if Adam remained holy through his state of trial, his posterity should, in consequence of it, be holy too ; but if he sinned, his posterity, in consequence of it, should be sinners too. Adam sinned, and now God brings his posterity into the world sinners. By Adam's sin we are become sinners, not *for* it ; his sin being only the *occasion*, not the *cause* of our committing sins.

X. That though believers are justified through Christ's righteousness, yet his righteousness is not transferred to them. For,

1. Personal righteousness can no more be transferred from one person to another, than personal sin.

2. If Christ's personal *righteousness* were transferred to *believers*, they would be as perfectly holy as Christ, and so stand in no need of forgiveness. But,

3. Believers are not conscious of having Christ's personal righteousness, but feel and bewail much indwelling sin and corruption. And,

4. The

4. The scripture represents believers as receiving only the *benefits* of Christ's righteousness in justification, or their being pardoned and accepted for Christ's righteousness sake. And this is the proper scripture notion of imputation. Jonathan's righteousness was imputed to Mephibosheth, when David shewed kindness to him for his father Jonathan's sake.

*Hopkins on Holiness*, p. 7, 8, 11, 12, 19, 26, 27, 28, 29, 34, 171, 197, 202.

*Edwards on the Will*, p. 234, 289.

*Bellamy's True Religion delineated*, p. 16.

——— *Dialogues between Theron and Paulinus*, p. 185.

*Smalley's Impotency of Sinners*, p. 16.

*West's Essay on Moral Agency*, p. 170, 177, 181.

*Spring's Nature of Duty*, p. 23.

*Manuscript by the Rev. Mr Emmons.*

SANDEMANIANS, so called from Mr Robert Sandeman, who published his sentiments in the year 1757. He was first a congregational preacher at Edinburgh\*, and afterwards came to New England, and settled a society at Boston, Danbury, and other places. His leading sentiments appeared to be as follow :

I. That justifying *faith* is no more than a simple belief of the *truth*, or the Divine testimony passively received.

II. That this Divine testimony carries in itself sufficient ground of hope, and occasion of joy to every

\* He was a disciple of Mr John Glass, from whom this denomination are called *Glassites* in Scotland.

every one who believes it, without any thing wrought in us, or done by us, to give it a particular direction to ourselves.

To support this system, the Sandemanians allege, *that faith is called receiving the love of the truth*; and the apostle often speaks of *faith* and *truth* to the same purpose, as in John xvi. 13, *the spirit of truth*. 2 Cor. iv. 13, *the spirit of faith*. Acts vi. 7, *obedient to the faith*. 1 Pet. i. 22, *In obeying the truth*. And divers other passages. The Scriptures consider *faith* not as a work of *ours*, nor as any action exerted by the *human mind*; but set it in direct opposition to every work, whether of *body* or *mind*. See Rom. iv. 4, 5. This contrast excludes every idea of activity in the *mind*, from the matter of *justification*; so that we cannot speak of preparatory works of any sort, without making the *gospel* a law of works. Rom. iii. 27, *Where is boasting then? It is excluded*, &c. Now boasting cannot be excluded, if any thing done by us sets us in a more probable way of obtaining the *salvation* which is of *grace*, whether it be called by the names of a *law work*, *serious exercise of seeking souls*, or labouring to obtain an interest in *Christ*, &c.

Every doctrine then which teaches us to do, or endeavour any thing towards our acceptance with God, stands opposed to the doctrine of the apostles, which, instead of directing us what to do, sets before us all that the most disquieted conscience can require, in order to acceptance with God, as already done and finished by Jesus Christ.

The particular practices in the *Sandemanian churches*, are as follow :

I. They

I. They constantly communicate together in the Lord's supper every Sabbath: for they look upon the Christian Sabbath as designed for the celebration of divine ordinances, which are summarily comprised, *Acts* ii. 42.

II. In the interval between the morning and the afternoon service, they have their *love-feasts*; of which every member partakes by dining at the houses of such of the brethren who live sufficiently near, and whose habitations are convenient for that purpose. Their professed design in these feasts, is to cultivate mutual knowledge and friendship, to testify that they are all brethren of one family; and that the poor may have a comfortable meal at the expence of the more wealthy.

This and other opportunities they take for the *kiss of charity*, or the saluting each other *with an holy kiss*; a duty this denomination believe expressly exhorted to in *Rom.* xvi. 16. *1 Cor.* xvi. 20. And other texts of scripture.

They not only use this kiss of charity at the *love-feasts*, when each member salutes the person who sits next him on each side, but at the admission of a new church member; to testify that they heartily welcome him into their fellowship, and love him for the sake of the *truth* he has professed. They allege that these *love-feasts* were not laid aside by St Paul's writing to the Corinthians, but enjoined to be observed in a right manner, and the abuses of them corrected; and that they continued in practice while the primitive profession of brotherly love remained among the ancient Christians; and *as charity never faileth*, *1 Cor.* xiii. 8. so neither should any of the duties, or expressions of it, be allowed to fail.

Since

Since our Lord tells his disciples that they ought to wash one another's feet, according to the example he gave them : John xiii. 14, 15. This denomination enjoin this as an incumbent duty.

They are directed to look upon all they possess as open to the calls of the *poor* and *church*; to contribute according to their ability, as every one has need.

*Sandeman's Letters on Theron and Aspasio*, vol. i. p. 16. vol. ii. p. 38.

*Glass's Works*, vol. iv. p. 9—40.

*Simple Truth vindicated*, p. 19—38,

*Practices of the Sandemanian Churches*, p. 5, 6.

SHAKERS, The first who acquired this denomination were *Europeans*; a part of which came from *England* to *New York* in the year 1774, and being joined by others, they settled at *Nisqueunia*, above *Albany*; from whence they have spread their doctrines, and increased to a considerable number.

*Anna Leese*, whom they style the *Elect Lady*, is the head of this party. They assert, that she is the woman spoken of in the twelfth chapter of Revelations; and that she speaks seventy-two tongues:—And though those tongues are unintelligible to the living, she converses with the dead, who understand her language. They add further, that she is the mother of all the *elect*: that she travails for the whole world: and that no blessing can descend to any person, but only by and through her, and that in the way of her being possessed of their sins, by their confessing

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and



and repenting of them, one by one, according to her direction.

The principal doctrines which are attributed to the Shakers, by those who have had opportunities to be acquainted with their religious tenets, are as follow :

I. That there is a *new dispensation* taking place, in which the saints shall reign a thousand years with *Christ*, and attain to perfection; and that they have entered into this state; are the only church in the world; and have all the apostolic gifts \*.

They attempt to prove this doctrine of a new dispensation, by counting the mystical numbers specified in the prophecies of Daniel, as well as by their signs and wonders.

II. That God, through Jesus Christ in the church, is reconciled with man: and that Christ is come a light into human nature, to *enlighten every man who cometh into the world*, without distinction.

III. That no man is born of God, until, by faith, he is assimilated to the character of Jesus Christ in his church.

IV. That in obedience to that church, a man's faith will increase, until he comes to be one with Christ, in the Millennium church state.

V. That every man is a free agent to walk in the true light, and choose or reject the truth of God

\* They assert, that all external ordinances, especially *Baptism* and the *Lord's supper*, ceased in the *Apostolic age*; and that God had never sent one man to preach since that time, until they entered into this *new dispensation*, and were sent to call in the *last*.

God within him; and, of consequence, it is in every man's power to be obedient to the faith.

VI. That it is the gospel of the first resurrection which is now preached in their church.

VII. That all who are born of God, as they explain the new-birth, shall never taste of the *second death*.

VIII. That those who are said to have been regenerated among Christians, are only regenerated in part; therefore, not assimilated into the character of Christ in his church, while in the present state, and, of consequence, not tasting the happiness of the first resurrection, cannot escape, in part, the second death.

IX. That the word everlasting, when applied to the punishment of the wicked, refers only to a limited space of time—excepting in the case of those who fall from their church:—But for such, there is no forgiveness, neither *in this world, nor that which is to come*.

They quote *Matt. xii. 32*, to prove this doctrine.

X. That the second death having power over such as rise not in the character of Christ in the first resurrection, will, in due time, fill up the measure of his sufferings beyond the grave.

XI. That the righteousness and sufferings of Christ, in his members, are both one: but that every man suffers personally, with inexpressible woe and misery, for sins not repented of, notwithstanding this union, until final redemption.

XII. That Christ will never make any public appearance, as a single person, but only in his saints:—That the judgment day is now begun in their church; and the books are opened, the

dead now rising and coming to judgment, and they are set to judge the world. For which they quote 1 *Cor.* vi. 2.

XIII. That their church is come out of the order of natural generation, to be as Christ was; and that those who have wives be as though they had none; that by these means, Heaven begins upon earth, and they thereby lose their sensual and earthly relation to Adam the first, and come to be transparent in their ideas in the bright and heavenly visions of God.

XIV. That there is no salvation out of obedience to the sovereignty of their dominion: that all sin which is committed against God, is done against them, and must be pardoned for Christ's sake through them, and confession must be made to them for that purpose.

XV. They hold to a travail and labour for the redemption of departed spirits.

The discipline of this denomination is founded on the supposed perfection of their leaders: the mother, it is said, obeys God through Christ; *European* elders obey her; *American* labourers, and the common people obey them, while confession is made of every secret in nature, from the oldest to the youngest. The people are made to believe they are seen through and through in the gospel glass of perfection, by their teachers, who behold the state of the dead, and innumerable worlds of spirits good and bad.

These people are generally instructed to be very industrious, and to bring in according to their ability to keep up the meeting. They vary in their exercises. Their heavy dancing, as it is called, is performed by a perpetual springing from the  
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house floor, about four inches up and down, both in the men's and women's apartment, moving about with extraordinary transport, singing sometimes one at a time, sometimes more, making a perfect charm.

This elevation affects the nerves, so that they have intervals of shuddering as if they were in a strong fit of the ague.—They sometimes clap hands, and leap so as to strike the joist above their heads. They throw off their outside garments in these exercises, and spend their strength very cheerfully this way: their chief speaker often calls for their attention, then they all stop, and hear some harangue, and then fall to dancing again. They assert, that their dancing is the token of the great joy and happiness of the new *Jerusalem state*, and denotes the victory over sin. One of the postures which increase among them, is turning round very swift for an hour or two. This they say is to show the great power of God.

They sometimes fall on their knees, and make a sound like the roaring of many waters, in groans and cries to God, as they say, for the wicked world who persecute them.

*Rathburn's Account of the Shakers, p. 4. 5. 6. 14.*

*Taylor's Account of the Shakers, p. 4. 7. 8. 9. 15. 16.*

*West's Account of the Shakers, p. 8. 13.*

UNIVERSALISTS, CHAUNCEAN. The sentiment which has acquired its professors this appellation, was embraced by *Origen* in the third century; and in more modern times by Chevalier

*Ramsay*, Dr *Cheyne*, Mr *Hartley*, and others. The plan of *universal salvation*, as exhibited by a learned divine of the present day, who, in a late performance, intituled, *The Salvation of all Men*, has made several additions to the sentiments of the above mentioned authors, is as follows.

That the scheme of revelation has the happiness of all mankind lying at bottom, as its great and ultimate end; that it gradually tends to this end; and will not fail of its accomplishment, when fully completed. Some, in consequence of its operation, as conducted by the *Son of God*, will be disposed and enabled, in this present state, to make such improvements in virtue, the only rational preparative for happiness, as that they shall enter upon the enjoyment of it in the next state. Others, who have proved incurable under the means which have been used with them in this state, instead of being happy in the next, will be awfully miserable; not to continue so finally, but that they may be convinced of their folly, and recovered to a virtuous frame of mind: and this will be the effect of the future torments upon many; the consequence whereof will be their salvation—they being thus fitted for it. And there may be yet other states, before the scheme of God may be perfected, and mankind universally cured of their moral disorders, and in this way qualified for, and finally instated in, eternal happiness. But however many states some of the individuals of the human species may pass through, and however long continuance they may be, the whole is intended to subserve the grand design of *universal happiness*, and will finally terminate in it; inasmuch, that the *Son of God* and *Saviour of men*,  
will



will not deliver up his trust into the hands of the *Father*, who committed it to him, till he has discharged his obligations in virtue of it ; having finally fixed all men in Heaven, when God will be *All in All*.

A few of the arguments made use of in defence of this system, are as follow\* :

I. Christ died, not for a select number of men only, but for mankind *universally*, and without *exception* or limitation.

For the sacred writers are singularly emphatical in expressing this truth. They speak not only of Christ's "*dying for us*," "*for our sins*," "*for sinners*," "*for the ungodly*," "*for the unjust*;" but affirm, in yet more extensive terms, that "*he died for the world*," for "*the whole world*." See 1 *Thes.* v. 10. 1 *Cor.* xv. 3. *Rom.* v. 6, 8. 1 *Pet.* iii. 18. *John* i. 29. iii. 16, 17. 1 *John* ii. 2. *Heb.* ii. 9, and a variety of other passages.

If Christ died for all, it is far more reasonable to believe, that the whole human kind, in consequence of his death, will finally be saved, than that the greatest part of them should perish. More honour is hereby reflected on God: greater virtue is attributed to the blood of *Christ* shed on the cross: and instead of dying in vain, as to any real good which will finally be the event, with respect to the greatest part of mankind, he will be made

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\* The learned author of the performance, from whence these arguments are extracted, has illustrated the passages of Scripture quoted, by critical notes on the original language; and by endeavouring to show their analogy to other passages in the inspired writings. Those who would form a just idea of the arguments, must consult the work itself,

to die to the best and noblest purpose, even the eternal happiness of a whole world of intelligent and moral beings.

II. It is the purpose of God, according to his good pleasure, that mankind *universally*, in consequence of the death of his Son Jesus Christ, shall *certainly and finally be saved*.

The texts which ascertain this, are those which follow: *First—Rom. v. 12th to the end*. There *Adam* is considered as the source of damage to mankind *universally*; and *Christ*, on the other hand, as a like source of advantage to the same mankind; but with this observable difference, that the advantage on the side of Christ *exceeds, overflows, abounds*, beyond the damage on the side of Adam; and this to *all mankind*. The 15th, 16th, and 17th verses are absolutely unintelligible upon any other interpretation.

Another text to the purpose of our present argument, we meet with in *Rom. viii.* from the 19th to the 24th verse. On the one hand it is affirmed of the *creature*, that is, of *mankind in general*, that they are *subjected to vanity*, that is, the imperfections and infelicities of a vain mortal life here on earth. On the other hand, it is positively affirmed of the *creature*, or *mankind in general*, that they were not subjected to this vanity, *finally and forever*, but, *in consequence of hope*, not only that they should be delivered from this *unhappy subjection*, but instated in *immortal glory*, as *God's sons*.

Another text to this purpose occurs in *Col. i. 19. 20.* *For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell; "and (having made peace through the blood of the cross) by him to reconcile" all things*

*things unto himself, &c.\** And in this epistle, ii. chap. 9. verse, the *Apostle*, speaking of Christ, says, “*in him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily,*” that is, he is the glorious *person* in whom God has *really lodged*, and through whom he will actually communicate, all that *fulness* wherewith he intends this *lapsed world* shall be filled, in order to its *restoration*. And Christ having this *fulness* lodged in him, *ascended up far above all Heavens*, that he might fill all things. Eph. iv. 10. And as the *filling all things* in the *lapsed world*, that they might be restored, was the *final cause* of the *ascension* of Christ up to Heaven, all things must accordingly be filled in fact by him sooner or later. The apostle, therefore, observes in the following verses, not only that he has imparted gifts, in prosecution of the end of his exaltation, but that, in order to the full accomplishment of it, he would go on to impart them, “*till we all come to the unity of the faith, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*” And it is declared, in Eph. i. 9, 10, that all these things, in Heaven and earth, shall be reduced from the state they were in by means of the *lapse*, into a well-subjected and subordinate whole, by CHRIST.

Another proof of the present proposition we find in 1 Tim. ii. 4. If God is able, in consistency

\* Our author paraphrases these texts in the following manner: “It pleased the Father that all *communicable fulness* should be lodged in his Son *Jesus Christ*, and by him as his great agent, (having prepared the way for it by his blood shed on the cross) to change back again all things to himself; I say, by him it pleased the Father to change the state of this lower world, of the men and the things of it, whether they be on the earth, or in the Heaven that encompasses it.

sistency with mens make, as *moral* and *intelligent* agents, to effect their salvation, his desiring they should *be saved*, and his *eventually saving them*, are convertible terms.

III. As a means in order to mens being made meet for salvation, God will, sooner or later, *in this state or another*, reduce them *all* under a *willing* and *obedient subjection* to his moral government.

The texts which confirm this proposition are numerous. The apostle says, in 1 John iii. 8, *For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil*. Parallel to this passage, see John i. 29. Matt. i. 21. and Psa. viii. 5. 6, as explained and argued from Heb. ii. 6. 9. These words are applicable to *Christ* in their strict and full sense: And if **ALL THINGS**, without any *limitation* or *exception*, shall be brought under subjection to *Christ*, then the time must come, sooner or later, in this state or some other, when there shall be no rebels among the sons of *Adam*—no enemies against the moral government of God. For there is no way of reducing rebels, so as to destroy their character as such, but by making them *willing* and *obedient subjects*. That this scripture is thus to be understood, is evident by a parallel passage in *Phil.* ii. 9, 10, 11.—The next portion of scripture in proof of the present proposition, we meet with in 1 Cor. xv. chap. from the 24th to the end of the 29th verse. Though the apostle, in this paragraph, turns our view to the end of a *mediatory scheme*, it is affirmed, that *universal* subjection to *Christ* shall first be effected, in a variety of as strong and *extensive* terms as could well have been used: as by “*putting down all rule, and all authority and power:*” by “*putting all enemies under*  
*his*

his feet," &c. It is worthy of special notice, that before Christ's delivery of the *mediatorial* kingdom, to the Father, the *last enemy must be destroyed, which is death*, the *SECOND DEATH*, which those who die wicked men must suffer *BEFORE* they can be *reduced* under willing subjection to *Jesus Christ*. For the first death cannot be called the *LAST ENEMY* with propriety and truth, because the *second death* is posterior to it, and has no existence till that has been so far destroyed as to allow of a restoration to life.

The *two periods*, when the mediatory kingdom is in the hands of *Jesus Christ*, and when *God* as *King*, will be *immediately All in All*, are certainly quite distinct from each other. And the reign of Christ in his mediatorial kingdom, may be divided into two general *periods*.—The one takes in this *present state of existence*, in which *Christ* reigns at the head of *God's kingdom of grace*, and that one *effect* whereof will be the *reduction* of a number of the sons of *Adam* under such an *obedience* to *God*, as that they will be fitted for a *glorious immortality* in the *next state*. The other *period* of *Christ's* reign, is *that* which *intervenes* between the general *resurrection* and *judgment*, and the time when *God* shall be *All in All*. This state may contain a duration of so long continuance, as to answer to the scripture phrase, *ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσι τοῦ αἰῶνος*, for *ever and ever*; or, as might more properly be rendered, for *ages of ages*. During the whole of this state, the righteous shall be happy, and the *wicked*, who are most *obdurate*, MISERABLE, till they are *reduced* as *willing and obedient subjects* to *Christ*; which, when accomplished, the *grand period* shall commence, when *God* shall be himself *immediately All in All*.



IV. The *scripture* language concerning the *reduced* or *restored*, in consequence of the mediatory interposition of *Jesus Christ*, is such as to lead us into the thought, that they are comprehensive of *mankind universally*.

There is one text at least so fully expressive of this idea, as renders it incapable of being understood in any other sense; it is *Rev. v. 13. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.*

*Dr Chauncy's Salvation of all Men*, p. 12, 13, 20, 22, 81, 91, 117, 118, 123, 124, 125, 126, 146, 163, 167, 170, 171, 172, 173, 177, 178, 179, 182, 183, 184, 186, 197, 198, 208, 209, 211, 217, 218, 219, 222, 237, 238.

UNIVERSALISTS, MURRAYEAN. This title also distinguishes those who embrace the sentiments of Mr *Relley*, a modern preacher of *universal salvation*, in *England*, and Mr *Murray*, in *America*. This denomination build their scheme upon the following foundation, viz. \*

That

\* The difference between this party and the *Chauncean Universalists*, will appear obvious, by comparing this with the preceding article.—The publisher thinks that punishment without end is clearly asserted in Scripture; and that the opposite doctrine tends to embolden bad men in wickedness. Both *Chancyean* and *Murrayean Universalists*, have been sufficiently refuted by *Mather*, *Gordon*, *Hopkins*, *Thacher*, *Johnson*, and other *American Calvinists*; and in a short, but able, pamphlet by Mr *Daniel Taylor* in *England*. A full reply to *Dr Chauncy* is soon expected from *Dr Edwards* of *Newhaven*. *Lampe's Latin Dissertations on the Eternity of Hell Torments*, better merit being translated into *English*, than many divinity books which have had that honour.

That Christ as *Mediator* was so united to mankind, that his actions were theirs, his obedience and sufferings theirs, and consequently he has as fully restored the whole human race to the Divine favour, as if all had obeyed and suffered in their own persons. The Divine law now has no demands upon them, nor condemning power over them. Their salvation solely depends upon their union to Christ, which God constituted and established before the world began. And by virtue of this union, they will all be admitted to Heaven at the *last day*; not one of Christ's members, not one of Adam's race will be finally lost. Christ having taken on him the seed of Abraham, he in them, and they in him, fulfilled all righteousness, obeyed the law, and underwent the penalty for the past transgression, being all made *perfect in one*. According to this union, or being in him, as branches in the vine, as members in the body, &c. the people are considered together with him through all the circumstances of his *birth, life, death, resurrection, and glory*. And thus considering the whole law fulfilled in Jesus, and apprehending ourselves united to him, his condition and state is ours. And thus standing in him, we can read the law, or the doctrine of rewards and punishments, without fear; because all the threatenings in the law of God, have been executed upon us (as sinners and law-breakers) in him. And this sacrifice of Jesus is *all-sufficient*, without any act of ours, *mental or external*.

This denomination allege, that the union of Christ and his church, is a necessary consideration for the right explanation of the following scriptures; as Psa. cxxxiv. 16, *In thy book all my members were written*. Eph. v. 30, *We are members*

of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 1 Cor. xii. 26, *Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it : or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.* 1 Cor. xii. 12, *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body : So also is Christ.* See Col. i. 18—Eph. i. 22, 23—Col. ii. 10—Rom. xii. 5—Eph. ii. 16—Heb. ii. 11—John xvii. 22, 23, and a variety of other passages in the inspired writings.

The Scriptures affirm, that “*by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men, unto condemnation.*”—Rom. v. 8. “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*—Rom. iii. 25. It is evident hence, that in Adam’s offence all offended ; which supposes such a *union* between Adam and his offspring, that his sin was their sin, and his ruin their ruin : thus by his offence were they made sinners ; whilst they, included in him, were in passivity, and he the active consciousness of the whole. And that his sin has corrupted the whole mass of mankind, both the scriptures and common experience evidently declare. If it be granted that there was such a *union* between Adam and his offspring, as rendered his sin theirs, why should it be thought a thing incredible, that the like *union* subsisting between Jesus and his seed, renders his condition theirs ? especially, as the apostle has stated the matter thus : “*As by one man’s disobedience, many were made sinners : so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.* Rom. v. 19. The Scriptures here showing the method of sin in Adam, and of grace in Christ, take an occasion to illustrate the latter by the former : intimating, that as sin came upon all Adam’s posterity by his single act, before they had any capacity

city of sinning after the similitude of his transgression, or of personal concurrence with him in his iniquity ; it must have been from such a *union* to him, as rendered his condition theirs, in whatever state he was.—Thus “ *by one man’s disobedience, many were made sinners.*” In like manner, *Christ’s righteousness* is upon all his seed ; by his single act, before they had any capacity of obeying, after the similitude of his obedience ; or of assenting to what he did, or suffered. This manifests such a *union* to him, as renders his condition theirs, in every state which he passed through, in so much that his righteousness, with all the blessings and fruits thereof, is theirs, before they were conscious of existence : Thus, “ *by the obedience of one, are many made righteous.*”

To prove that the atonement was satisfactory for the whole *human race*, they allege, that the scriptures abound with positive declarations to this effect : “ *The restitution of all things is preached by the mouth of all God’s holy prophets ever since the world began.*” It is said, that “ *Christ died for all ;*” that “ *he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.*”

This denomination admit of no punishment for sin, but what *Christ* suffered ; but speak of a punishment which is consequent upon sin, as *darkness, distress* and *misery*, which, they assert, are ever attendant upon *transgression*. But as the Scriptures assure us, the *blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin*, “ *that mystery of iniquity,*” which is so predominant at present in the human heart, will finally “ *be consumed by the spirit of his mouth, and be destroyed by the brightness of his coming.*” As “ *to know the true God, and Jesus Christ is life eternal ;*



nal; and as "all shall know him from the least to the greatest." That knowledge, or belief, will consequently dispel or save from all that *darkness, distress* and *fear* which is ever attendant on *guilt* and *unbelief*: and being perfectly holy, we shall consequently be perfectly and eternally happy.

*Relley's Union*, p. 7, 8, 13, 14, 22, 26, 36.

*Townsend's Remarks*, p. 16, 17.

*Female Catechism*, p. 13.

*Appendix*, p. 55, 56. The natives of *New-England* believed not only a plurality of *Gods*, who made and govern the several nations of the world, but they made *Deities* of every thing they imagined to be great, powerful, beneficial, or hurtful to mankind: yet, they conceived one Almighty Being, who dwells in the *south-west* region of the Heavens, to be superior to all the rest: this Almighty Being they called *Kichtan*, who at first, according to their tradition, made a man and woman out of a stone, but upon some dislike destroyed them again; and then made another couple out of a tree, from whom descended all the nations of the earth; but how they came to be scattered and dispersed into countries so remote from one another, they cannot tell. They believed their Supreme God to be a *good Being*, and paid a sort of acknowledgment to him for plenty, victory, and other benefits.

But there is another power which they called *Hobbamocko*, in English the *Devil*, of whom they stood in greater awe, and worshipped merely from a principle of terror:

The immortality of the soul was universally believed among them; when good men die, they said their souls went to *Kichtan*, where they meet their



their friends, and enjoy all manner of pleasures; when wicked men die, they went to *Kicktan* also, but are commanded to walk away; and so wander about in restless discontent and darkness forever.\*

*Ib.* p. 57, 58. There are a few Jews in *Rhode-Island*, who adhere to *Jemima Wilkinson*, who was born in *Cumberland*. It is said by those who are intimately acquainted with her, that she asserts, that in October 1776, she was taken sick and actually died, and her soul went to Heaven, where it still continues. Soon after, her body was re-animated with the spirit and power of *Christ*, upon which she set up as a public teacher, and declares she has an immediate revelation for all she delivers; and is arrived to a state of absolute perfection. It is also said she pretends to foretel future events, to discern the secrets of the heart, and to have the power of healing diseases: and if any person who makes application to her is not healed, she attributes it to their want of faith. She asserts, that those who refuse to believe these exalted things concerning her, will be in the state of the unbelieving *Jews*, who rejected the counsel of God against themselves; and she tells her hearers, this is the eleventh hour, and this is the last call of mercy that ever shall be granted them: for she heard an enquiry in Heaven, saying, "Who will go and preach to a dying world?" or words to that import: and she says, she answered, "Here am I, send me;" and that she left the realms of light and glory, and the company of the heavenly host, who are continually praising and worship-

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ping.

\* Neal's History of New-England, vol. I. p. 33, 34, 35.

ping God, in order to descend upon earth, and pass through many sufferings and trials for the happiness of mankind. She assumes the title of the *Universal Friend of Mankind*: hence her followers distinguish themselves by the name of *Friends*.\*

*Ib.* p. 59. A gentleman of *New-York*, who lately visited a society of *Shakers* in *Acquakanoeh*, whose congregation consisted of about ninety persons, was astonished at the facility with which they performed almost incredible actions: one woman, in particular, had acquired such an understanding in the principle of balance, as to be able to turn round on her heel a full half hour, so swiftly, that it was difficult to discriminate the object. They are extremely reluctant to enter into conversation upon the principles of their worship, but content themselves with declaring, that they have all been very great sinners, and therefore it is that they mortify themselves by painful exercises.†

*Ib.* p. 59, 60. After the coming of the white people, the *Indians* in *New-Jersey*, who once held a plurality of Deities, supposed there were only three, because they saw people of three kinds of complexions, viz.—*English*, *Negroes*, and themselves.

It is a notion pretty generally prevailing among them, that it was not the same God made them who made us; but that they were created after the white people: and it is probable they suppose their God gained some special skill by seeing

\* Brownell's Enthusiastical Errors, p. 5, 7, 9, 14.

† Boston Gazette, October 25, 1784.

ing the white people made, and so made them better: for it is certain they look upon themselves, and their methods of living, which they say their God expressly prescribed for them, vastly preferable to the white people, and their methods.

With regard to a future state of existence, many of them imagine that the *chichung*, i. e. the shadow, or what survives the body, will, at death, go southward; and, in an unknown but curious place, will enjoy some kind of happiness, such as hunting, feasting, dancing, and the like. And what they suppose will contribute much to their happiness in the next state is, that they shall never be weary of those entertainments.

Those who have any notion about rewards and punishments in a future state, seem to imagine, that most will be happy, and that those who are not so, will be punished only with privation, being only excluded from the walls of the good world, where happy spirits reside.

These rewards and punishments, they suppose to depend entirely upon their behaviour towards mankind; and have no reference to any thing which relates to the worship of the Supreme Being. \*

\* This account is extracted from the Journal of the late pious, Mr Brainard, who formed a society of Christian Indians at *Croft-weekfung*, in *New-Jersey*. (See Brainard's Life, p. 448, 449, 450.)

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